

THE  
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PUSEYISM,  
OR  
ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY *versus* PROTESTANTISM.

"THE Liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free," is Liberty in all that concerns the soul; in its Relation to and in its Intercourse with its Maker; it is spiritual Liberty in Faith and Worship. The Christian Religion has removed all obstructions between man's soul and God, all ceremonies and mediations, all sacrifices and oblations, all priests and propitiations. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man; his Gospel, received into the heart and interpreted by the reason, is the medium of Christian Salvation. Thus we receive his Gospel as committed to the everlasting records of the New Testament. We acknowledge no other authority; we ask for no one on earth to mediate for us; so long as we have the Bible, we allow the Divine right of no institution or office, as essential to our knowledge of the terms of Christian salvation, or to our application of them. We take the Bible and say, this is our priest, our charter, our covenant, our creed; it needs no supplement of man's contrivance; we are responsible to God alone for its use.

Yet in saying all this so distinctly and positively, we directly oppose the professed convictions of many disciples of Jesus Christ, who maintain and insist as positively upon the necessity of an authority, external to and coexistent with the

authority of Scripture. Priests and Sacrifices, they tell us, are not done away ; Scripture requires a *supplement* in Tradition, to explain it, to be a commentary upon it ; an institution called the Church is the earthly fold, with its enclosures and its shepherds, through which alone the sheep of the covenant can be introduced into the heavenly fold.

The Bible, or the Church, — this is the great issue for the higher departments of controversy in our day. The question is not a new one, but it takes new forms and aspects. It is to be agitated in our day with a power and an interest, of which as yet the community has but a faint conception.

This question has long been before the world under different shapes and names ; it now presents itself under the name of “Puseyism.” The use of that word is to be regretted, for it is indecorous and unjust. Custom and necessity may to a degree be an apology for it, for the word now expresses a system, and is the title of a controversy in which all professed Christians have an interest and a share. To those who ask what non-Episcopalians, and Unitarians especially, have to do with this controversy, we answer, with great brevity, we have an interest in deciding the essentials of Christian Faith, in opposing superstition; bigotry, and priesthood.

The controversy embraces this issue, whether the Scriptures alone, or the Scriptures and Church Authority taken together, decide the obligations of Christians, and the conditions of Salvation. The length and breadth of the issue suspended is simply this, shall every doctrine of faith, every ceremonial of worship, every institution of religion, expose itself to the free scrutiny of all professing Christians, so that they may ask the reason for it, may claim to understand and approve it ? Or shall there be an authority external to Scripture, that of the Church, which shall challenge the reverence and obedience of Christians, which shall decide, or rather, prevent all controversies, which shall enjoy prerogatives and enrobe itself in the solemn folds of mystery and sanctity ? This is the question, which is now expressed by the word *Puseyism*. It is a great question ; we wish clearly to apprehend the issue, to know whither it looks, whereto these things will grow. It is not for the sake of controversy, that we institute the inquiries and utter and vindicate the views, which, under a sense of responsibility, we now present. We do not wish to glory in the confusion, which now distracts those who,

agreeing in the necessity of Church Authority, are divided only as to the how much or how little of it they must allow. We are looking for a better lesson. We wish to have calm and clear apprehensions of important truth; and standing as we do, at the extremest possible distance from the principle of Church Authority, we wish to define our position.

The first point, which we would aim to make as clear as language will express it, is to present the essential issue of the question before us. It is to decide, not what form of Church Discipline is most expedient, effective, or dignified, most ancient or prevalent, but whether any external or supplementary authority, or government of any kind, is to be linked with the reception and study of the Bible. Let it be distinctly understood, that here is a question with two sides, and that the intelligent Christian must rank himself upon the one or the other side, knowing the conditions of his choice and meeting all that it involves. There is the true Protestant principle, that if a man has the Bible in his hands, and never sees a church, a priest, or a sacrament, never hears of a creed or a council, he still has all that is necessary to his knowledge and improvement of the terms of salvation. This is one side of the question now in agitation. We adopt this side with our eyes and ears open. We know all that it involves of sectarianism, fanaticism, rationalism, and infidelity. Yet we choose it, we prefer it, we identify ourselves with it, we glory in it, we would die for it with joy, if it needs more confessors. The other side of the question is that, which includes more or less of Church Authority, supplementary help with the Bible, whether it be the writings of two Fathers or of twenty, the traditions of one century or of six, one creed or three creeds, five points of doctrine, or thirty-nine articles of faith, one saving ordinance, or two saving sacraments, one order of priests, or three orders of clergy, a Pope, or a council, or a presbytery. There are very many sects who take this side in common, and embrace the sentiment which maintains the necessity of Church Authority. All individuals and all communions are on this side, who impose a creed, if it be but one single line. The parties upon this side are in continual contention as to how much of this extra-Scriptural Authority they are to adopt. Thus far we are at issue with all of them. We take the other side, and keeping the liberty of choosing all forms, rites, discipline, and institu-

tions, first in accordance with the spirit of our religion, and then with reference to our edification, our conscientious preferences, and our taste, and then with reference to the fitness of place and time, we are ready with all charity and humility to say, that we are on the better side, and to invite at least all that hesitate to come to us.

Let the distinction between these two sides be clearly understood ; let not the line which divides them ever be blurred ; let all the conditions and consequences of committal to either of them be known ; let there be no subterfuges ; no reserve ; no sweetening of bitter pills for the sake of disguising them ; let theories be consistently followed out ; let us choose the good, even if evil result from it, rather than the evil with the hope, that it will issue in good. Choose intelligently, and then be consistent.

Now let us put in a plea of Justification ; some but not all will think it necessary. Why, it may be asked, why not be satisfied with taking your own side and keeping aloof from the other side ? We answer, because we are crowded and shall soon be trampled upon. And we give a more solemn and significant answer even than this. We say, that the great and holy truth, which in spite of our differences is common to both divided parties, is hazarded and jeopardized by unconsecrated weapons, and by a departure from the rules of Gospel warfare. Church Authority has ever concerned itself more with consciences than with sins. We cannot maintain our ground without defending it. The liberty, which was obtained by protest, must be secured by argument and good use.

It is hard to dispute, it is disagreeable to bring into contempt anything which mingles itself with the religious sentiments of a professed Christian. In opposing the pretensions of Ecclesiastical Authority we must offend those who approve it. But why ? Why need we offend them ? They will tell us that we deny what they approve, we condemn what they revere. Be it so. But before yielding to the pain which we inflict, and murmuring at it, would it not be wise to ask yourselves why you hold doctrines which may be thus attacked and condemned, why do you maintain a point involving the eternal interests of others as wise, as pure, as sinful, or as sincere as yourselves, and a point which seems to them altogether absurd and not to be allowed ? Look then first to the doctrine which we attack, and reconsider it, spend your first

excited feeling and interest there, be sure you are right in it, and then hear what we say, we, who have all the means of learning the truth, and all the desire to learn it that you have. Be careful how you hold doctrines which those, over whom you have no advantage, are induced by every Christian feeling and hope, which they cherish, to impugn. We do not deny your Christian character, your spiritual attainments, your religious liberty, or the acceptableness of your mode of worship to the Father who is a Spirit. We will honor you for every grace and virtue which you exhibit ; we will worship with you, if we cannot enjoy the mode which we prefer ; we will exchange with you all sympathies and charities, we will call you worthy disciples of Jesus Christ, and pray to be admitted with you into his kingdom. Neither will we question your liberty to connect with your Christian professions a belief in any documents or terms which you may please, nor will we deny your right to institute those modes of governing your churches, disposing your services, ordaining your clergy, and administering the sacraments, that may recommend themselves to you. On all these points, however, you are as much open to our scrutiny and criticism, as we are to yours. But what we do and will do, in spite of the bugbear charge of attacking the Church which is preferred against us, is to impugn some conditions, which you make essential on our part to the reception and enjoyment and rewards of the Christian faith. We charge you with adding to the terms of Christian salvation, of confounding some of the most trivial and some of the most unwarrantable and some of the most pernicious conditions with the Gospel of the grace of God. We differ with you as to what is essential, and what is not essential, to the prevalence and security of Christian truth and principle on this earth. We read history, we observe the experience and ask the opinions of our fellow men, and from all these sources we learn that everything that makes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or religion in general, oppressive, repulsive, uninviting, or questionable, has no part in it, tends to nourish infidelity and to cause confusion of the truth with falsehood, and is therefore to be put away. Men justly dread every doctrine which has once written itself in their blood, and wrung their nerves, and riven their sinews, and poured boiling lead into their throats, and burned them at the stake. The doctrines which do this we call doctrines additional, supple-

mentary to the Scripture, we trace them in channels of their own, channels not yet obliterated, to the principle of Church Authority, and we renounce the principle in its mustard-seed germ, for against the full-grown trunk, if God has not so effectually blasted it that it may not grow again, we could do nothing.

We believe that many persons are induced to give their apparent countenance and support to the sects which are based upon this principle of Church Authority, and especially to the Episcopal sect, without a full apprehension of what the principle involves. In conventions, in ecclesiastical proceedings, in statistical reports, their names and numbers are used as conscientious adherents to a system, of whose issues they are utterly ignorant, of whose pretensions they have no just idea, whose supposed proof they have never examined. Will such persons allow us to say, that the more solemn a doctrine, the more momentous its consequences, the more it affects the eternal interests of their brethren, just in that proportion should they be solicitous to examine its proof, or at least to understand what they seem to affirm? If an individual knowingly chooses to give his apparent favor and real support to any doctrine, in utter indifference as to what it involves, let him or his children take the consequences, when ecclesiastical despotism shall grow again to what it once was. It is not at all unusual to hear some, who are ranked among the most stringent advocates of Church Authority, accuse those who deny it of ignorance. This is a cool and comfortable way of regarding an opponent, namely, to look at him through the eyes of their own ignorance, the effect being to effuse the hue, as is seen in looking through smoked glass. There are other advocates of the principle of Church Authority, who wonder that a person can acquaint himself with what they call "the beautiful order of the Church," and not seek its pleasant shade. Such persons may never have heard of travellers, who after exploring other countries prefer to come back to their own. They may as well adopt the test of the Swedenborgians, that no one is in a fit state to examine their system, unless he is ready and disposed to receive it. Roman Catholic writers will often boast of the majority of Christian believers. But how many of their majority are *believers*, how many of them have ever dreamed of what their Church alleges for itself, to say nothing about reviewing its

proof? An Episcopal minister has lately asserted in print, that nine tenths of professed Christians believe one of the doctrines of Church Authority. He would have been nearer the truth had he said, that nine tenths of professed Christians do not believe anything. *Believe!* How much does that word mean? It has conditions, it has consequences; there are conditions and consequences to each tenet which *belief* covers. When it may be said of a man, that he *believes* anything as a part of religious truth, it may be said of him, that he has thought more than most persons have thought. We do not say, that a Christian ought to understand all that is involved in Ecclesiastical pretensions. But we do say, that whoever professes to believe, that the eternal interests of any human being depend on them, ought to understand them himself. How solemnly important is it to know what is involved in a doctrine, which affects the welfare of human beings for eternity — especially when the doctrine does not concern the conduct, but merely the belief of men! Assertions, as to the dependence of men's salvation upon the helping power of the Church, are made in the "Oxford Tracts," which are absolutely astounding, and which we read with amazement as coming from men, who must know from their own experience, that the infirmities of the heart and flesh (of which they say nothing of practical value) are far more hazardous than the aberrations of the intellect.

These conditions and consequences — far reaching as are the latter — may justify our examination of professed doctrines. And let us add, if it be necessary, that the *Church* offers to receive all, and to ordain all ministers who are fit for their own communions, if they will embrace her tenets. It might seem also to be for the interest of the clergy to aggrandize their office by investing it with the high claims of Church Authority. We do not this, because we dare not do it, and should be apt to laugh in each other's face when performing our parts, as Cicero says did the priests and augurs of Rome when heathen, and as we know some do now when Rome is Christian. We have no interest but to learn the truth, and we have all the means that others have for acquiring it.

Again apologizing for using the word "Puseyism," we proceed to show how it presents that great question of the Bible, or the Church. The controversy now in agitation involves far more important and serious questions, than those which have yet come into popular notice. Some of the

people differ from some of the Bishops in thinking that they have some interest in the matter. The controversy springs from the bosom of the Church of England, and from Oxford, the more ancient of her universities. The Reformation of ecclesiastical abuses was checked in its midway progress in England, and brought to a violent close. Her established Church was the result of a compromise between liberty and authority, between Puritanism and Prelacy. The Puritans wished to remove every vestige of the Roman Hierarchy and discipline, and therefore they struck at the principle of Church Authority. Political changes gave the Puritans a temporary ascendancy, which, however, they soon lost. The English Church, severing itself from the Roman Church, took with it something, and left something behind; and as it has always mourned more or less for some portions of what it left, and been assailed for what it brought away, we should understand its relations to Romanism in these particulars. The English Church retained of the Roman its whole hierarchy, down to the sub-deacon, (the monarch or the prime minister, it is hard at the present time to say whether of the two, being the English Pope,) the Liturgy, translated from the Roman Mass Book, the three creeds, Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian, two of the sacraments, viz. Baptism and the Eucharist, the exclusive prerogative of Bishops to ordain and confirm, the differences of rank, dress, and privilege among the clergy, festivals, fasts, and saints' days. These were the borrowed jewels. The flesh pots, which the Church of England left behind with Romanism, were the plea of infallibility, the inquisition, the confessional, the sacrifice of the mass, and the spirit of unity and subordination. The American Episcopal Church differs from the English, in taking out of its service book the Athanasian creed, and the forgiveness of sins in the office for visiting the sick.

The English Church began in resisting Popery, and in making concessions to Puritanism. The preface to the Liturgy of Edward VI. contained a passage, lamenting that the work of purification was left incomplete, and breathing a prayer, that those who came after might carry on the work. For attempting to fulfill this very prayer, our fathers were driven to these wildernesses. The Reformers attempted to carry on the work in Elizabeth's time, and they suffered fire and im-

prisonment. A meeting of some Bishops, and other divines, who afterwards became Bishops, met with the Bishop of London in 1641, and suggested the very changes which the Puritans or their successors wished. But the former method was soon reversed ; concessions were now made to the Romanists, instead of to the Puritans, and resistance, instead of opposing the Romanists, turned against the Puritans. It is a remarkable fact, that the Church of Rome has never yet made an official concession to the spirit of reform.

During the brief period in which the Church of England made concessions to the Puritans, it did so only sparsely and grudgingly, not enough to satisfy the Puritans, but too many to please “the Church.” Now the great object of the Oxford, or Puseyite, or High Church party in the present controversy, is to win back what was then conceded — to repair breaches, to reinstate Church Authority in all its ramifications, to gather sacred associations around a ritual and ceremonial worship, and to rear an ecclesiastical institution, as an appendix or a preface to the moral law, and as a supplement to Scripture. These are the objects and purposes of those in a Protestant Church, who are said to have Papistical tendencies. If the system must bear the name of an individual, it should rather be called from the Rev. Mr. Froude, with whom it originated.

There has always lingered, indeed there has always appeared, in the English Church, the full spirit of that system, which has now been suddenly brought under popular notice. The system may well bear the name of Oxford Divinity, for in that home of antiquity the system has a natural birth-place and life. Oxford has always been behind the age in its spirit and tendencies ; it has ever been the uncompromising opponent of innovation. It differs widely in history and character from Cambridge, where philosophy and literature and the sciences have been cherished, rather than pictures and images of saints. Oxford will now show to its visitors the prison door, which closed upon Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, and the spot where the flames of martyrdom climbed around their flesh. Sydney Smith, himself a pensioner of the Church, says that “all establishments die of dignity ;” a kind of slow poison, which has been killing Oxford ever since its birth. Amid the solemn shades of its Gothic cloisters, in the repose of its kindred bookmen, who relish the dusty aroma of its

treasured volumes, there is very much to nourish the spirit which reveres antiquity, and looks out with dread upon the bustling world, and the restlessness of human thought. A whole ray of sunlight has not been seen at Oxford, since the deep-set abutments and reëntering angles and massive towers of its grey piles were reared, and the crowded walls of dingy stain make the day shorter there, by one hour, than in any other part of the earth under the same latitude.

Lord Bacon with profound and comprehensive wisdom observed, that things alter for the worse spontaneously, if they be not altered for the better designedly. Some kindred spirits at Oxford, whose pleasant home and easy cares gave them much of each other's society, looked out upon the world, and saw a state of things with which they were not pleased. They saw that ecclesiastical authority was every where relaxed, that religious tests in civil interests had been taken off, that "Dissent" in doctrine and discipline was advancing with rapid strides, that the various religious sects were providing excitements for the people, in extra meetings, in philanthropic efforts, and visiting societies, and finally, the Oxford men learned, five years after it had been published in the newspapers, that the Roman Church was rebuilding her altars.

Thus moved, a little coterie at Oxford, consisting principally of four clergymen—Dr. Pusey, and the Rev. Messrs. Newman, Keble, and Williams, began about ten years ago to draw the attention of the public, by the issue of a series of publications, entitled "Tracts for the Times." The series had been extended to the ninetieth number, in the midst of intense excitement and increasing opposition. The object of the Tract No. 90 was to put upon the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England a construction, which would make them acceptable to two different classes of persons, viz. to dissatisfied Romanists, who would be willing to join the Church of England, were it not for her intensely Protestant character, and to dissatisfied members of the Church of England, who were on the point of leaving their own communion because it was so abusive of Rome. This Tract was regarded as a throwing aside of the veil by the Oxford coterie, and was so decided and bold, that the Bishop of Oxford put an end to the publications by the exercise of his authority. Yet this was not putting an interdict upon the promulgation of such opinions. For as the opinions had been advanced in

various works, such as sermons, occasional pamphlets, reviews, essays, stories, poems, &c., so they continued to find their way to the public through the same multiplied channels of the press.

To characterize these publications by any epithets or descriptions, of a merely general character, would scarcely convey an idea of their purport and object. They are for the most part written in a subdued tone, and as their writers would describe it in an "awful manner." Still there is a lordly and presuming spirit, an overbearing and dictatorial temper, a self-assured and one-sided mode of address, which are apparent on every page. They show learning of a certain kind ; i. e. a remembrance of things that have been forgotten, and which might as well remain under oblivion ; dry and useless recollections of past follies and errors, old wives' fables, nonsensical legends, and exploded superstitions, revived for the sake of the reverence which once attached to them. They presume upon the ignorance of the multitude, and take no note of those perplexities which invest religious histories. The deep and involved questions in spiritual philosophy and in historical records, touching the very foundations of faith, and tasking the most thoughtful minds in civilized Christendom, are nowhere recognised or spoken of in the "Tracts."

And now the question arises, do their authors advocate Popery, Romanism ? We may answer as they answer, No ! They are the only consistent Episcopalians ; they alone are true to the theory of their Church. Individuals among them have trespassed on the Roman territory, but the sect has not, for the field which they have labored upon is common to Papists and Episcopalians ; it has never been fenced off by either party. Undoubtedly there is at the bottom of the new movement a lingering fondness for Roman prerogatives and glories ; perhaps there is a rivalry in the love of ceremony and the love of power ; the tail of the dragon does indeed appear, and some of the same kind of paint as that which covers all over the scarlet lady of Babylon. But the Oxford writers insist, that they are only seeking to win back the forced concessions of their Church ; that all their doctrines were recognised by their old Divines, and are part and parcel of Episcopacy, of the system of Church Authority and Institution, which have been cast into the shadow and overlooked or undervalued. They

do not like the term *Protestant*, because it is a mere negation; but they prefer the term *Primitive* as designating their Church. They maintain that the Reformation did more evil than good — that laymen cannot deduce the principles of Christian faith from the Scriptures — that there is no salvation out of the *Church* — that “the *Sacraments*, not *Preaching*, are the sources of Divine Grace” — that the confessional, and commemorative services for the dead, and prayers to the saints should again come into use — that the instruction and authority of Tradition are coördinate with Scripture — and they teach something very like to the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, the real presence of Jesus Christ in the bread and wine. They make a deceptive use of certain phrases, by employing terms in their own sense, and making from them statements, which are true only in another sense ; thus, “the Church is God’s plan of salvation, and man may not improve upon it.”

The Oxford writers lay the weight of their system upon two principal tenets, which form the very groundwork of Episcopacy, the Apostolical succession of the Episcopal clergy, and the exclusive prerogatives of the Church over which they preside. Their purposed endeavor is, to tighten the bonds of Church Authority, to arouse and spiritualize its sleeping and its worldly ministers, to establish in the minds of the people an idea of an especial and sacred prerogative in Episcopacy, to restore a reverence for antiquity and tradition, the observance of festivals and fasts, and a more frequent administration of the Lord’s Supper — to revive various neglected usages of *holy* memory, to build up even to the clouds the wall which separates the *Church* from all sects, and then to wage an even-handed, or rather an *affectionate* contest with Rome. They advocate true theoretical Episcopacy — but not Protestantism. The two doctrines of the Apostolical Succession, and of the exclusive prerogatives of the Episcopal clergy, are after all the great matters involved and involving all else. On these rests the principle of Church Authority, which, once established, has a place outside of the earth on which to poise its irresistible lever. These are both Episcopal doctrines, and they are both Roman doctrines.

Holding, therefore, the views which we do, of the *Bible only*, and denying all Church Authority, we must maintain that Puseyism, or High Churchism, is more consistent than Low Churchism, and that Romanism is more consistent than

either; i. e. we can recognise only two systems, our own, and Episcopacy with its theory completely carried out, which is Romanism, saving only the necessity of a male Pope. Instead of resting the controversy with Rome upon single doctrines or institutions, which confessedly need some other support than that which Scripture affords them, we strike at the main question of Church Authority, which embraces them all.

There is a kind of half-way profession of Church principles, which charitably seeks to save the souls of *Dissenters*, without wholly letting go its own exclusive assumptions. We do not ask the benefit of this charity, but return it till its donors will give more. The doctrine of the Apostolical Succession of the Bishops is common to High Church and Low Church Episcopacy, and to Romanism. If it means anything, it means the utmost which it claims to mean ; if we allow it at all, we will allow it in its completeness. The theory of it is, that the Apostles have living successors and representatives on this earth, who inherit some of their prerogatives, viz. the Bishops of Dioceses, each being the head or superior of several inferior ministers, called Presbyters and Deacons. It is alledged that there has been an unbroken succession of these peculiar representatives of the Apostles, in the line of Bishops, who alone can ordain ministers. These are said to succeed to the powers of Apostles in the government and discipline of the Church, the framing of constitutions, the enacting of laws, the ordaining of ministers, the forgiveness of sins, and the excommunicating of offenders. It is not pretended that Bishops succeed to all the privileges and immunities of those whom the Savior commissioned, for besides empowering them to bind and to loose, he gave them authority over all devils and to cure diseases, to tread on serpents and scorpions, and to eat any deadly thing without harm. A dose of arsenic would doubtless prove as fatal to a Bishop as to a deacon. Probably the precise date, when the line was drawn between the Apostolic privileges which a Bishop inherited, and those which were alienated, is involved in the indistinctness of " Primitive Usage." The exclusive power to ordain the only authorized ministers of the Christian Religion is prerogative enough for Bishops to claim, for if this is admitted to be their right, Christian liberty is gone forever. Power is put into the hands of a few, who may agree how they will use it. A priesthood is established having more authority, be-

cause it transcends this world, than was given to the Jewish high priest, or than was claimed by the priests of Paganism. This doctrine of Apostolical Succession is not a doctrine to be bandied about at uncertainties, or admitted by parts. If it be true, then the very existence of the Christian Church depends upon it ; if it is not true, then whoever asserts it, or any portion of it, wrongs many Christians, and trifles with a matter altogether too serious for such treatment. Now this exclusive prerogative of ordaining ministers is of itself an “awful” claim; but when taken in connexion with the functions and authority which this ordination confers, and the claims which are advanced by the ministers thus ordained, that is, putting together Apostolical Succession and the Prerogatives of the Episcopal clergy, we may see what a mighty and imposing fabric is reared. This is the temple which the Oxford divines would construct. Its clergy have the power, and they alone have the power, to administer the Christian Sacraments, and the Sacraments in their hands are magical charms. This is a matter on which we must speak distinctly, and listen with all our minds. The Oxford writers assert that the “Sacraments, not preaching, are the sources of Divine Grace,” and they say this in the face of Paul’s assertion, that “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. i. 21.) They tell us that Baptism, water poured on the head of an infant, wipes out the stain of sin inherited from Adam, removes the curse of God from those young and lovely brows, relieves the child from the penalty of hell torments, and makes it an heir of bliss. And the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, what awful mystery, what dark magic rather, does Oxford divinity gather around that simple and beautiful ordinance, which Jesus Christ asked his disciples to perpetuate, that when they drank wine and ate bread together, on an occasion which saw them assembled for worship, it should be in remembrance of him. What a potent charm does this ordinance become in the hands of an exclusively authorised clergy, the efficacy depending on their functions, not on the spirit of the receiver ! The Oxford writers assert that theirs is the only Church, “which has a right to be quite sure that it has the Lord’s body to give to his people.” The minister becomes a priest, the table an altar, the bread and wine a sacrifice, the communion a mysterious inhalation of some wonder-working grace. This is

not a subject to be treated with levity, whatever it may wear of fond superstition, however wide a departure it may indicate from "the simplicity that is in Christ." These two doctrines, which are part and parcel of the Episcopal theory, being once established, the foundation of Church Authority is laid. How then is there room for dispute as to the superstructure, which those, who are thus exclusively and awfully commissioned and empowered, proceed to build upon it? Why contend about lesser matters which are included in the greater, that pass unquestioned? Inquisitorial examinations into the faith of individuals are necessarily required and allowed; ritual services and obligatory ceremonies are imposed; questions of interpretation are settled by authority; fasts and festivals are appointed; consciences are fitted to ready made bandages, and must yield into them, or grow out to fit them. Now if all these are the legitimate issues of an admitted principle, who has a right to resist or question them? The Bishop, by succeeding to the place of an Apostle, is the only one who can ordain, and shall he not be the judge of the whom or the how? Church Authority is the supplement to, and the interpreter of, the Scripture; it must be revered and never resisted; for whether, in any given case, it be exercised rightly or wrongly, it has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and can enforce what it decrees. It is indeed for us, for all, who question that authority, to demand that it shall never temporize nor waver, that it shall always be consistent with itself, for only thus can we hope that its utter falsity will be exposed.

This may serve to show what we, what all professed Christians, and all who desire to be Christians, have to do with this controversy. For after all, the question presented so excitingly in the existing controversy around us, is the old question, which some have erroneously thought was disposed of at the Reformation — the question of Church Authority, in addition to the Bible, as possessing claims upon Christians. Shall we admit that a body called *the Church* — supposing such a body can be defined, may assume authority over the consciences, the creed, and the worship of Christians, authority to interpret, define, help out, and guide the faith of disciples, to ordain ceremonies and forms, to build up institutions, and to interfere with the terms of salvation?

In reference to this assumed authority, we take a position which is very easily defined, and as we think, as easily re-

tained. Certainly we see more than we could describe all around us to make us satisfied with it, and resolved to hold to it as the very truth of God, the glory of Christ's Church, the refuge and the joy of conscience. We deny that pretended Church Authority, utterly and entirely ; not one syllable of it will we listen to with allowance ; if no two ministers can agree in their creed, if no congregation can be kept united without it, if all public worship must be suspended, and religious discord must prevail without it, we say, let it be so, for any nuisance on this earth is preferable to that of Church Authority. The fear of such lamentable consequences, as we have summoned up, we esteem as idle as any monk's legend, but if they were all to be sadly realized, we distinctly assert our preference of them to the imposition of Church Authority, which has been the cause of more corruption and infidelity, more ignorance and superstition, more bigotry and hypocrisy, more wretchedness and slaughters, than a legion of other evil agencies.

That principle of Church Authority we utterly resist, and we offer against it the following among many objections :

I. It is wholly unwarranted by the New Testament, and unnecessary for the fulfilment of the purposes of the Christian dispensation. Even the preservation of the Christian records, the only materials which we need for salvation, does not depend upon Church Authority, any more than the preservation of Homer's Iliad. Some devoted scholars, whom the Church has excommunicated, have done more for the vindication and the interpretation of those records than the whole bench of Bishops. Their security is found in the hearts and minds of individual believers, and in the over-watching Providence of God. There is no tenet of Christianity which enjoins Church Authority, nor is there any Christian doctrine or institution which requires its aid. Piety before God, and love to man, are its solemn and engaging summaries of duty. And how simple the directions for fulfilling them — for piety, " thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength " — " the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth " — and for love — " thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself " — " do good unto all men as ye have opportunity." " This do and thou shalt be saved." Where then is there room, where the necessity

for Church Authority to interfere with man's salvation ? The New Testament contains such pointed rebukes, and so many warnings against Jewish traditional laws and usages, that it is hardly probable that the Christian Religion would have been left to depend for its very essence upon them. Yet the Oxford men tell us, that tradition is necessary in the interpretation of Scripture. But all the difficulties in the interpretation of Scripture lie in a tensfold degree in the interpretation of tradition. On this point we will enlarge under another head. Tradition is necessary to the Oxford system, but it is not necessary to Christianity. It is found necessary to bring in Tradition, because it is confessed that the Bible does not teach that system. If the Divine Law was once made void by Tradition, we ought to have had warning if the law of Christ was to depend upon it for its very sanction.

II. We object, secondly, the undefinable, the illimitable character, which is essential to Church Authority. What shall it be ? How much ground shall it cover ? How far shall it extend ? How shall it be enforced ? Who shall be its agents ? What penalties shall wait upon it ? These are all serious questions. To assure yourselves that they are not visionary, read all Christian history. Look around you now upon the actors in the present controversy, the Romanists, the High Church and the Low Church Episcopalians, divided on this very point. How marvellously does the controversy illustrate the indefiniteness of Church assumptions ; how manifest is the significance of this objection, as now applied ! Who can close his eyes to its illustration ?

The Churchman says that the Apostles, besides writing, taught orally, and established institutions. These oral teachings and institutions are known only through Tradition. Thus Tradition becomes the needful supplement of Scripture, and Tradition is comprised in the writings of the Fathers. But how many are Fathers, and through what length of time ? Augustine, himself one of the most renowned of the so called Fathers, seems to have spoken most wisely, in saying — “the Apostles were the only Fathers, and all others are but sons.” There are sixteen Fathers numbered in the first three centuries of the Church. We have about the same number of historians of the Protestant Reformation in the same space of time. A pretty close parallel might be run between these Fathers and these historians as to accuracy, mental and moral

qualifications, prejudices, partialities, and errors. From the whole of either class we can gather much that is useful, we can depend upon no one of them, and all together do not interfere with our right to exercise our own judgment, or to search beyond their writings. Yet this parallel, if strictly carried out, would fail in many particulars, for we have complete histories of the Reformation, and only fragments of the works of the Fathers. Some we know only through professed quotations in the works of others, some are interpolated, some fictitious, and all sadly discordant. Even the Romanists repudiate one hundred and eighty of the extant writings, ascribed to the first six centuries. Bishop Jeremy Taylor candidly allows that the "Fathers consent only to the Canon of Scripture, and hardly to that." Yet Mr. Newman of the Oxford School says, [Lectures on Romanism, p. 225,] "When the sense of Scripture, as interpreted by reason, is contrary to the sense given to it by Catholic antiquity, we ought to side with the latter." But it cannot be doubted that if some of these Fathers were now living, they would be consigned to our lunatic asylums; some of them continued through life in the Pagan notions which they were thought to have cast aside at their conversion.

Such miserable helps as these are said to be necessary to explain the lucid pages of Scripture, and to insure by their aid the salvation of souls. If Scripture needs a Commentary in Tradition, what Commentary shall we have for Tradition, which needs it a thousand fold more? The Jews had a Commentary on the law of Moses, and at least two Commentaries on that. Our Church dignitaries too have liberally furnished us with their Commentaries on the Commentaries of the Fathers, and it is difficult to say in which of them rubbish and nonsense most abound. Our present point, however, has been to show by the evidence of these rival Commentaries, and the human nature that is in them, that the principle of Church Authority is wholly undefinable and illimitable.

III. Again, we object to the principle of Church Authority, that it has, by virtue of its own nature, a constant tendency to aggrandize and extend itself, to make additions to its own code, till it goes far, far beyond the warrant of Scripture, and at last, taking the place of Scripture, wholly supersedes the authority of the record, with a pretence of expounding which it began its encroachments. Was not this precisely the state

of things from which the Reformation in a measure relieved the Christian world ? Not to enlarge upon so fruitful a topic, and one so crowded with dread warnings, let us call up some single picture of indisputable historic verity, and wonderfully instructive. Luther had reached the age of manhood, had been the pupil of Monks and of Doctors in Divinity, and was pursuing in a library, large for those days, and in the most famous University of Germany, the studies which resulted in his single-handed combat with the whole hierarchy of Christian Europe. In that library, he by accident discovered one day a Bible, and knew not what it was. A Bible—a holy Bible,—it was to him as much a marvel as it would be to a Hottentot, were it to drop at his feet from the skies. Luther thought that every word of sacred writ was comprised within the clasped covers of his Prayer Book. He knew not that there was a Bible ; and the book which he found was covered up in dust. — A true figure of the times was that dusty Bible, and of the state of that Church, whose foundations of sand he was to disturb. Luther knew not that there was a Bible. Yet the whole circling year was pervaded by the functions of Church Authority ; there were solemn forms and sacred things all around him, festivals, pictures, rosaries, missals, shrines, madonnas, cells, oratories, chapels, and cathedrals ; the city streets and the country roads swarmed with ecclesiastics ; Church dignitaries filled the highest posts every where. All these were the issues of Church Authority, and Church Authority had superseded the Bible. When Luther found that Book, he dusted it, and then he read it, and then he sought to make its light shine. The world knows the result. The world has once witnessed the full effects of the principle of Church Authority, when it superseded the Bible. Did it so recommend itself, that we should give it one more trial ? It is in the fair way for obtaining such a trial, when it presumes, by one syllable or by one rite, to stand between the human soul and God the searcher of hearts.

IV. To mention but one more objection, and that in itself a decisive one to the principle of Church Authority, we urge the utter impossibility of establishing it upon any legitimate basis. The Roman and English Hierarchies, which respectively call themselves *the Church*, quietly take for granted the very thing at issue, viz. that the opinion of the true disciples of Jesus Christ has at some time been unanimously ex-

pressed, and has through all time been expressed with a uniformity, entirely in contrast with the discordant views of existing sects. Let a period be shown, if possible, when there were no parties in the Christian Church, each embracing some true disciples. As to the Church itself from which this Authority is to issue, we affirm that it is not a visible body, by no earthly possibility could its members be discovered or brought together. The Lamb's Book of Life is not copied from our Ecclesiastical records. As a charitable, or philanthropic institution, or brotherhood of professed believers, perhaps something like a visible Church does exist. But God alone, the Heart-Searcher, He alone knoweth its members. They have never been together since the Saviour ascended on high. They have never been represented in any Council. Their opinion has never been asked as to the authorized interpretation of Scripture, or the legality of any supplement to it. The Church is an invisible body ; its members are known only to Christ their Head, and to God, his Head. Church Authority, even to be entitled to the first condition of its prerogative, would need to be exercised in their name, by their harmonious consent, and enforced by their own justifiable measures. But where are they, where is their representative beneath the skies, who has ever consulted them, where are their decrees ? You might as well ask for the standard to which all the men of good taste in this world would consent, and then assume such a standard, and proceed to persecute all artists who did not adopt it.

But it is said, that the terms and conditions of Church Authority have been defined by General Councils. We answer, there has never been a General Council, and there never can be one on this earth. The thing is an utter impossibility. There have been assemblies so called ; but what were they, how were they constituted ? Picked men, whose opinions and biases were known, have been summoned to them ; the majority, which existed before the Councils were held, had rule in them, and settled the decisions ; dispute in the Councils was followed by persecution out of them. It was thus that Church Authority originated ; thus it has from age to age gathered its accretions.

The first assembly, which is miscalled a General Council, was not held till nearly three centuries after the ascension of the Saviour, and during that period all the heresies and corrup-

tions, which deform the Christian Church, had had their origin and grown rife. A Council was called at Nice, in Bithynia, in the year 325, for the sake of authorizing the corruption of the simple Christian faith, by confounding the Mediator with the Father, the being who was sent on earth to declare the will of God, with the Being who sent him. This object was temporarily attained by the personal influence of the Emperor Constantine, and Athanasius, an enemy of Arius. Gieseler, an ecclesiastical historian of high authority among Orthodox divines, very significantly remarks, "As the number of Arian bishops present was much smaller than that of their opponents, the decision was in favor of Alexander.—It was established, as the Creed of the Church, that the Son was created from the essence of the Father, and was of the same essence as the Father, and the doctrines of Arius were anathematized." The very Christian Emperor Constantine banished all that would not sign the decree. In good sooth, a famous representation of the Christian Church. Let us see how the Assembly was constituted. There is no agreement as to the number of so called Bishops at Nice, but suppose we take the number 318, generally admitted, how could these represent the Christian Church? The little territory of Isauria, a part of Pisidia, itself only a province of Asia Minor, sent seventeen of its Bishops to the Council. The habitable part of Africa, then crowded with Churches, and as large as the whole of Asia Minor, and which, says Bingham, the great Episcopal Annalist, had at that time nearly seven hundred Bishops, sent only *one* to the Council. All Spain sent but *one*, all Gaul, or France, sent but *one*, Rome *had not even one*. Constantine himself in a few years turned the tables in the controversy; Athanasius was banished, and Arius was received to communion. What are we to say, too, when Councils make contrary decisions? Thus Unitarianism was condemned at a Council of 318 Bishops, A. D. 325.—But of the forty-five Councils held in the fourth century, according to Archdeacon Jortin, thirty-two resulted in favor of Arian or Semi-Arian opinions, and only thirteen prevailed on the other side. Says Jerome—"The world groaned to find itself Arian." So much for the earthly representations of that kingdom, which Jesus Christ said was "not of this world." Where then shall we look for a legitimate basis of Church Authority, in interpreting or in making additions to Scripture?

These are the heads of but a small part of the objections, which we might urge to the principle of Church Authority, as imposing either doctrines, ceremonies, or institutions. We dread it, and resist it, because we know its illegitimacy, its arrogance, its enmity to liberty of thought, its encroachments upon the Christian faith. For behold now in this light those two great assumptions, alike of the Roman and the English system, resting upon Church Authority, the Apostolic Succession of the Priesthood, and its exclusive and marvellous prerogatives. Scripture arguments are mere shadows in the train of proofs, by which an attempt is made to sustain Episcopacy ; its chief support is from discordant Tradition. The whole object of the Oxford Tract, No. 85 — the most powerful one in the series, is to show the insufficiency of Scripture.

Amid the mist and uncertainty which gather around the early centuries of Christianity, we can conclude with a good degree of assurance, that the forms of ecclesiastical discipline varied in different places. Archbishop Whately candidly admits, what it would seem an unbiased reader of the New Testament would at once discover, that neither the Saviour nor his Apostles instituted any hierarchy, appointed any traditional code, or created any extra-Scriptural tribunal. The form of discipline was left wholly free to the choice of the disciples, according to their preferences and their circumstances. And this liberty was fully used. Rome appears early to have adopted the Episcopal form, Alexandria the Presbyterian, Carthage the Congregational. Diocesan Episcopacy, as it now exists, i. e. the superiority of ministers, called Bishops, to other ministers, called Presbyters and Deacons, was a thing wholly unknown for at least two full centuries of the Church, and had an origin wholly independent of Apostolic appointment. The Apostles and their converts preached in Jewish Synagogues, where they could find them, and very naturally, the leader of the Synagogue became, on his conversion, the minister of the Church. The Apostles, of course, stood foremost and took precedence every where, and all whom they ordained to the ministry had equal privileges. By the suggestion of the Apostles, the disciples chose certain persons to relieve them of a labor, which interfered with their other duties. The seven individuals thus selected were charged with the duty of distributing the charity funds,

and tending upon the communion table, that the Apostles might give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (Acts, vi.) These persons are called deacons, and they discharged the office now discharged by individuals bearing the same title in our Congregational Churches. Yet Episcopacy makes them an inferior order of clergy. The two other orders are designated by the names of Bishops and Presbyters. But these names in the New Testament designate precisely the same office, namely, that of the minister who presided over a congregation, neither the one nor the other term conveying the idea of dependence, of superiority, or inferiority ; nor can a single text be quoted in which the word, Bishop, denotes a person who presided over several congregations. The identity of the terms, Bishop and Presbyter, is apparent from Acts, xx. 17 and 28, where St. Paul sends to Ephesus for the Elders or Presbyters in that city, and then addresses them as Bishops, each having charge of one flock, not of many. The Episcopalian must here admit, not only the identity of these two titles, but also that there were several Bishops, or Overseers in a single city. There is no avoiding this admission, and it rests not upon disjointed tradition, but upon the Apostolic word. Let Episcopilians tell us who was the presiding Bishop of Ephesus. Was it His Grace the Archbishop John, or His Holiness Pope Peter, or the Right Reverend Barnabas, or Cardinal Timothy ? The smile, which those queries provoke, shows how utterly at variance are all ecclesiastical dignities with the simple usages of Holy, Apostolic times. Even Paul and Barnabas, themselves Apostles, were ordained to their work not by other Apostles, as Bishops so called now ordain Bishops, but by certain teachers or elders at Antioch, (Acts, xiii.) and they afterwards received the right hands of fellowship from three Apostles, (Galatians, ii. 9.)

The earliest pretended records subsequent to the New Testament, from which it is attempted to substantiate the Apostolic appointment of a Hierarchy, are certain Epistles ascribed to Ignatius. No early authors mention these Epistles ; there are two sets of them, differing widely from each other ; they advance doctrines which were not heard of till more than an hundred years after the death of Ignatius ;\* scholars of all

\* See Note at the end of the article.

denominations doubt them, and their most strenuous advocates admit that they have been grossly corrupted. Why look to such a doubtful record for one of the most essential conditions for the existence of the Christian Church ? If Paul could find room in his Epistles to send for his cloak and parchments, and to transmit kind greetings to his personal friends, why could he not spare a single line to tell all coming ages that the Church, which the Saviour had founded, was based upon Diocesan Bishops ?

We do indeed trace this Hierarchy to Tradition, to unlicensed Tradition, compelling the observance of a custom which convenience and circumstance first recommended. As the central Synagogue, congregation, or church in town or city enlarged, it was convenient for some of its members in the suburbs to establish new places of worship. These might be presided over by some fit person, sent from the parent congregation to preach, exhort, and pray ; the minister of the parent congregation being still looked to for counsel, sympathy, and help. This was the natural origin of Episcopacy, and then it had an unnatural and an unscriptural growth amid abounding corruptions. And from this corruption has now sprouted the pretence of Apostolical Succession for the Roman and the English Priesthood. The pretence is not to be allowed, for it identifies the very existence of the Christian Church with poor fables, and rotten supports, and fearful hazards. If every link of the chain cannot be traced and proved, what a risk holds our faith in peril ! We well know how a certain class of minds may be wrought upon by the bold assertion of especial authority, on the part of a particular order of ministers. This is the secret of much of the remaining hold, which Episcopacy has upon the affections of its disciples. There is great power in the pretence. The Oxford divines do not flinch, they are consistent and bold in laying down its *awful* conditions. They assert that there is no power or virtue in the Lord's Supper, if it be administered by those not ordained by Bishops, and that all ministers, who presume to officiate at the rite without such ordination, "are treading in the footsteps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whose awful punishment you read of in the Book of Numbers, xvi. comp. with Jude 11." Tract 35. This is plain speech. So also do they speak plainly when they say, in tracing their Hierarchy, that "every link in the chain is known from St. Peter

to the present English Archbishops." But this, to speak in equally plain terms, is a downright misstatement. No mortal man can tell us who were the first seven Bishops of Rome. Baronius, a Popish historian, admits that, in a succession of fifty Popes, not one of them was either pious or virtuous, that during different series of years there had been no Popes, at other times two or three together, and that the rival Popes of Rome and Avignon excommunicated each other. Then, too, the Roman Church, from which the English Church descends, has excommunicated its daughter, and the ban has never been removed. Observe, too, what a risk of extinction the English Church was once subjected to. During the period in which England was without a King, and Cromwell ruled it, Episcopacy was put aside. At the Restoration of the Monarchy only nine of the Bishops survived, the eldest being near four score years of age. Had Cromwell, who at his death was but fifty-nine, reached that same age, it is more than probable that England could not have furnished the three Bishops necessary to constitute another Bishop. Rome, who had excommunicated her, would not have helped her in the emergency. Then what would have become of the Church of Christ? It would have been forever extirpated. This sad chance had been foreseen, but not provided against; a hasty security was seized upon as soon as possible, and thirteen new Bishops were consecrated in a little more than two months.

Through how corrupt a channel at many intervals and in many characters must the line of Bishops proceed! Some of them during the Middle Ages had their sacred office purchased in infancy, were inducted into it in boyhood, and without knowing how to read the New Testament, or even that such a book existed, they might don their robes once a year for some ceremonial, and spend the rest of their time in lawless fighting, or intrigue. Yet the Christian Church is to be identified with the prerogatives of many men such as these, while Christian ministers themselves, like Watts, Doddridge, and Robert Hall, who have kindled the life of piety in millions of hearts, are to be considered as intruders, whose labors God will not bless! But let the theory be held in consistency, if held at all.

The distinction of orders among the clergy, wholly unscriptural as it is, is followed by pernicious consequences,

consequences which, so far as they affect the faith, impede its vital power, rather than constitute one of its essential conditions. Its first fruit is rivalry. It has become the fashion for the Bishops of the Episcopal sect in this country, to take the name of our Commonwealths. This custom has neither propriety nor antiquity nor precedent to justify it. The pretension may not do much harm now, but if the sect should largely increase, who that observes the strife for all other offices does not know, that the old question of the disciples—"Who shall be greatest?"—will frequently come up in dispute and bitter feeling, and party division? How wise, then, was the Saviour's counsel—"Ye are all brethren!"

These, then, are the weak foundations, and the objectionable fruits of the principle of Church Authority, as imposed upon Christians without warrant of Scripture. Our grounds of assurance, our duty to resist it, are plain. It will not be necessary that we set ourselves in constant warfare against it. Error is ever continually struggling to correct itself; indeed it accomplishes much that way, though amid blunders. The upholders of the anti-Protestant principles, which we have examined, exercise the private judgment which some of them deny to us, by quarrelling with one another. One of our comforts, though not altogether the most Christian solace, must be, that those who insist upon the claims of Ecclesiastical authority have disputes among themselves. Rome and England will never join hands upon it. Archbishop Whately, primate of the English Church in Ireland, has bred confusion in his own camp, by denying the Divine right and the Scriptural sanction of Episcopacy, as he rests it upon expediency and civil liberty to choose amid forms where all is free. The Bishop of Ohio has cast public censure upon the Bishop of New York. As to the little ceremonies and observances which some would restore, as parts of the ancient faith, it is not probable that laymen, to any extent, will feel an interest in them. They are fitted to give pleasure only to a priestly or a formal spirit, to engage the feelings of him who enacts them, and the children among the spectators. They remind us always of a military parade, in which the officers have all the glory.

Let it be understood how and why we object to the formulaires and ceremonies appointed by Church Authority. Their illegality is their first obnoxious feature, their inherent ten-

dency to increase and exalt themselves is another ; and besides these features, common to all which an attempt is made to enforce, they come at last to be confounded with the essential conditions and principles of faith. Great and good was the example of Hezekiah, king of Judah ; for when he came to his throne we are told, that he did what was right in the sight of God, demolishing images, and breaking in pieces even the brazen serpent, which Moses had made, because prostituted to idolatry.

While we thus entirely renounce all Church Authority, as beset with manifold evils, we are thrown upon the Protestant principle of Private Judgment applied to the Bible. We go all lengths with this principle, we allow it, we urge it, we insist upon it. But we are reminded of the dangers which beset this principle too, of the wild vagaries of Sectarianism, of Mormonism, and Millerism. We answer that we regret all this, but we cannot help it, neither could Church Authority restrain it, when the Church was all powerful. We know the dangers of Rationalism and Infidelity. They are fearful. But how are they to be resisted ? Authority is the most weak of all bulwarks against them. If Miller undertakes to deduce the era of the last conflagration from the length of horns and trumpets, Church Authority will not convince him he is wrong. If the prophet of the Mormons has found another Bible, the hierarchy, which professes to sustain itself upon the older book, will be no match for him. We do indeed require that common sense, sober, instructed reason, and sound discretion be admitted, as the conditions of the right interpretation of the Bible, as of all other books. Then the risk and hazard, which is run in the exercise of private judgment as respects faith, is no greater than the risk and hazard as respects conduct in life, which is run by every individual in the exercise of his moral freedom, in a world where sin abounds.

We are content to rest the security of the Christian Religion upon the wants of the human heart and the value of the Bible. We have no fear that it will perish for want of a hierarchy. The necessities and wants of every age will give to it proper forms, services, and institutions. Our fathers were satisfied with unwarmed meeting houses, with *deaconing* their hymns, and with the music of the human voice. We have introduced the furnace and the organ; some of us kneel,

some of us stand, and some of us sit, when we pray ; and we believe that the song of praise and the prayer of faith reach the throne of the Most High now as of old time. So long as the Epistles to Timothy and Titus are extant, Christians will know what are the qualifications of worthy ministers, in heart and mind, in temper and talents, and in life, and will need no priestly office or support. Paul directs Timothy as follows : “ And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also,”—faithful men, able to teach, these are the New Testament qualifications for Christian ministers. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Those who love ceremonies may place them on their proper basis of taste, temperament, and preference, and then they will occasion no Holy Wars.

We can feel the power both of ceremonial and of simple worship. We confess that we have been impressed by the solemn services of the ancient cathedral, where emblems of holiness and loveliness addressed all the senses, where each Christian grace and virtue had an altar, a saint, a marble statue, and a painted canvass, where a mysterious awe enthralled the feelings, and the melodious symphonies of choral strains raised mortals to the skies and brought Seraphim down, where the priests appeared to be a holy company and the frankincense an accepted offering. We confess the power of such a worship. And we have felt the same, we know not whether more or less, in the cold churches of Scotland, where paint and organs are heresies, and the worship is stifled without a form. Let us combine, if we will, all that impresses us in either, in our own Churches, remembering always the only condition of accepted worship, which has the authority of Jesus Christ—“ God is a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

G. E. E.

## Note. Page 295.

Bishop De Lancey in his Sermon at the consecration of Bishop Eastburn, (page 17,) quoted these "Epistles of Ignatius," with the same apparent reverence with which he quoted Scripture, neither dropping the slightest hint, or making the most distant reference, which would warn his hearers or readers of the exceeding dubiousness allowed by scholars to invest those documents. Is this candid, even though he be fully persuaded of their authority? We prefer the eloquent and truth-telling plea of the great Milton, who says,

"To what end then should they cite him [Ignatius] as authentic for Episcopacy, when they cannot know what is authentic in him, but by the judgment which they brought with them, and not by any judgment which they might safely learn from him? How can they bring satisfaction from such an author, to whose very essence the reader must be fain to contribute his own understanding? Had God ever intended that we should have sought any part of useful instruction from Ignatius, doubtless he would not have so ill-provided for our knowledge, as to send him to our hands in this broken and disjointed plight; and if he intended no such thing, we do injuriously in thinking to taste better the pure evangelic manna by seasoning our mouths with the tainted scraps and fragments of an unknown table, and searching among the verminous and polluted rags, dropped over-worn from the toiling shoulders of time, with these deformedly to quilt, and interlace the entire, the spotless and undecaying robe of truth, the daughter, not of time, but of heaven, only bred up here below, in Christian hearts, between two grave and holy nurses, the doctrine and discipline of the Gospel."—*Prelatical Episcopacy.*

We subjoin a few authorities from the "house divided against itself."

## BISHOP STILLINGFLEET.

"By the loss of records of the British churches, we cannot draw down the succession of Bishops from the Apostles' times.

## REV. E. J. RIDDLE.

"Whatever may become of the Apostolic succession, as a theory, or an institute, it is impossible, at all events, to prove the fact of such succession, or to trace it down the stream of time. It is impossible to prove the personal succession of modern bishops, in an unbroken Episcopal line, or from the Apostles, or men of the Apostolic age."

## BISHOP BURN.

"Bishops and Priests, both were one office, in the beginning of Christ's religion. It is not of importance whether the Priest made the Bishop, or the Bishop the Priest; considering that in the beginning of the Church, there was no difference between a Bishop and a Priest.

Bishops, *as they be now*, were after Priests. In the New Testament, he, who is appointed to be Bishop or Priest, needeth no consecration, for election thereto is sufficient. Temporal men may preach and teach, and in cases of necessity, institute Ministers — they may preach the word of God and minister sacraments, and also appoint men to those offices, with the consent of the congregation."

**BISHOP BURNET.**

"This ransacking of records about a succession of orders, is not a thing possible for any to be satisfied about — for a great many ages, all those instruments are lost, so that how ordinations were made in the primitive church, we cannot certainly know. The condition of Christians were very bad, if persons must certainly know how all ministers have been ordained since the Apostles' days — for it is impossible to satisfy them, unless the authentic records of all the ages of the church could be showed, which is impossible, for though we were satisfied that all the priests of this age were duly ordained, yet, if we be not assured that all who ordained them, had orders rightly given them, and so upwards till the days of the Apostles, the doubt will still remain."

**ARCHEBISHOP WHATELY.**

"There is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up, with any approach to certainty, his own spiritual pedigree. It is inconceivable that any one, even moderately acquainted with history, can feel a certainty, or any approach to certainty, that, amidst all the confusion and corruption of the dark ages, no one unduly consecrated or ordained was admitted to sacred offices. Even in the memory of persons living, there existed a Bishop concerning whom there was so much mystery and uncertainty prevailing as to when, where, and by whom he had been ordained, that doubt existed in the minds of many persons living, whether he had been ordained at all. Suppose the probability of an unbroken succession to be as 100 to 1 in each separate case, in favor of the legitimacy and regularity of the transmission, and the links to amount to 50, (or any other number,) the probability of the unbroken continuity of the whole chain must be computed at 99-100 of 99-100 of 99-100, &c. to the end of the whole fifty."

## PARKER'S DE WETTE ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IN undertaking to give our readers a notice of this work in the few pages that can be devoted to it, we find ourselves in great difficulty. So many questions are treated, so many important principles are discussed, such vast variety of topics is introduced by these two volumes, that the reviewer in despair is tempted to copy the table of contents, and end with saying, that a perusal of the book will reward all those who prize affluence of learning or independence of thought. We cannot even enumerate the number of controverted points, which author and translator endeavor to settle. Much less can we review their arguments or enter fully into the merits of any of their leading doctrines. A few words upon the author and the translator, upon the aim of the work and its principal features, must suffice for the present.

As a theologian and moralist De Wette is well known to our readers, and little need be said of him in these respects. Mr. Parker has been first to introduce him to us as a biblical critic; a character in which he stands higher in Germany than as theologian or moralist. In a letter to the writer of this notice, the author allows, that his dogmatic theological works have had no remarkable influence upon his countrymen, both on account of the middle ground which he occupies between the dominant parties, the orthodox party of Tholuck and others, and the rationalist party of Strauss and his school; and on account of the Friesian philosophy which so often appears in his views of religion. These causes have not interfered with the success of the work before us. It is his most successful labor, and has already reached the fifth edition. It is purely a literary effort, and does not pretend to advocate any particular dogmas in philosophy or theology.

De Wette's labors began with the investigation of the Old Testament. As early as the age of twenty-five, he published a dissertation on Deuteronomy, which shows that he had then begun the train of thought, which is so fully carried out in this Introduction. The next two years he published two volumes upon the Pentateuch, and thereby divided with Vater the reputation of originality in this department of criticism. The matured results of his critical labors appear in the present

volumes. His Introduction to the Old Testament came out in 1817, when the author had attained the age of thirty-seven, and it reached the fifth edition in 1840. It has been revised by him with the light of all recent labors in the same department, so that it now is a treasury of knowledge on the subject. When we remember, that he has also put forth a work on Jewish Antiquities, and a new Translation of the entire Old Testament, besides writing much upon the doctrines and ethics of that ancient volume, we cannot but look with respect upon this effort to introduce to us the literature of the chosen people of God.

They who open these volumes, expecting to find the rich fancy and copious illustration of Herder, will be sadly disappointed. On that very account, however, they ought to honor the author, since his fancy is prone to be even too exuberant, and he must often have made a sacrifice in preferring the duty of the critic to the impulse of the poet. His aim was to give a critical Introduction, and it is precisely this that he has done. No man can, even in the driest critical labors, hide his predominant tastes and opinions; and we cannot but allow that, under the severe mantle of the critic, we may detect the free step of the liberal Christian and the buoyancy of a poetic soul. We should be sorry, however, to have no other assurance of his evangelical faith than what he has here given us. They, who are familiar with his recent expositions of the New Testament, will not be in any danger of confounding him with Strauss and other deniers of our Savior's divine mission.

Mr. Parker has given great labor to his enterprise. His translation is very idiomatic English, and, so far as we have compared it, faithful to the spirit of the original. In some cases, however, the rhetoric is rather more characteristic of the translator than the author. The additions to De Wette's text are so many as often to raise the doubt, whether the title is not a misnomer, and the translator's name should not stand side by side with the author's. The title originally designed would have been more appropriate — *Introduction to the Old Testament on the basis of De Wette.* If all the additional matter had been inserted in notes or an appendix, it would have been more appropriate. It is taking great liberties with an author to interpolate his work, add whole sections and enlarge others, and sometimes oppose, in one section, the doctrine maintained in

the previous one. Every author should have the privilege of fixing the proportions of his own work, and the translator should beware of interfering with his plan, although with the purpose of improving it. Yet Mr. Parker has made the work much more valuable by his additions. His references to the labors of English critics, his quotations from distinguished German scholars, and the philological information gathered into the appendix of the first volume, should entitle him to the thanks of every American student. Although holding opinions in which few of us can follow him, we should respect the spirit which seems to have guided these labors. He carries himself with the dignity becoming a scholar, and leads us to hope that he will cease to pain the religious community, by the tone of his remarks upon doctrines and institutions dear to them. Only in an occasional note a little of the old spirit breaks out. May it be permanently exorcised. The words of his preface incline us to believe, that deeper wisdom and experience have brought to him deeper humility. "It is but fair to suppose," he says, "that in a work so large and so difficult, I have made mistakes. These I leave for the critic's sagacity to discover, and for his kindness to excuse; hoping that he will remember how often the spirit is willing, while the flesh is weak; and while he exposes my errors, will do it in candor, and with only the love of truth." The reader should ask no more and accord no less.

In looking over the pages of the work itself, the reader's first feeling must be one of disappointment. The subjects, which he expects to see handled with a master's skill, are hardly touched upon. The character of the ancient covenant, the divine authority of the Law, the divine mission of the Prophets, the purpose of Providence in the singular discipline of the Jewish race, the distinction between the temporary and lasting elements in the Old Testament, between the words of man and the word of God, the bearing of Judaism upon Christianity, and the reflex light of the Gospel upon the Law; these are topics upon which the philosopher and theologian are most curious to be informed, but upon which the author has very little to say. His aim is entirely critical,— or to use his own word, *historico-critical*. He distinguishes the aim of this department from that of other departments of biblical study, from *biblical history*, *archæology*, *geography*, *chronology*, and *hermeneutics*. He considers first the Bible collection in general, then gives a general introduction to the canonical books of the Old Testament,

and lastly, a particular introduction to each of those books. The result is, that the work is rather one of useful reference than entertaining perusal. We are inclined to think, that notwithstanding the author's careful definition of his purpose, he might have taken a wider range, without transgressing the proper limits of an introduction. It is impossible to prepare one fitly for reading a book, without making known the object of that book. An introduction to Homer should inform us of the purpose of the poem. An introduction to the Bible must give us an idea of the aim of the sacred books. De Wette indeed mentions, that the consideration of it in a religious view, that is, according to the dogma of inspiration and revelation, belongs to dogmatic history. Yet without expressly stating his doctrinal views, he all along implies them. His omission of the dogmatic view amounts to a declaration of disregard of its dogmatic worth. One who holds a different view of the Old Testament, one who views it as a revelation of the Eternal Word, and as to be understood by a Christian sense of the plan of God, in preparing the way for the gospel, will, of course, pursue a different mode. The Churchman, who regards the ancient theocracy as in all respects established by the Almighty, and as still having authority in its main features, cannot but show his opinion in all his criticisms, and will deem every sacred book unintelligible, apart from this doctrine. He will even rest the purity of the canon upon his doctrine of Church authority. Without going so far as this, it does seem no more than just to give more prominence, than our author has done, to the leading purpose of revelation, especially in a work where the course of remark is often so conjectural, that trifling considerations are decisive, and a general principle is needed, to guard against capricious inferences. To view the several books of the Old Testament separately, and without much regard to their associate significance, is somewhat like examining the various members of the human body, without heeding the vital power that gives unity and life to all. To those of us who are disposed to value, more than De Wette, the doctrine of the unity of divine revelation, and the peculiar mission of the Jewish race, the present work must be unsatisfactory. The view of Hävernik upon the office of an introduction seems to us more correct. He affirms, in opposition to De Wette, that biblical introduction should find a scientific principle and development in itself. Yet we ought, on many accounts, to be glad that we have now a

work of reference, that aims merely to be a treasury of critical information, without busying itself with the more ambitious inquiries into the purport of revelation, and the nature of religious inspiration.

The first question that people ask, when a new work on the Old Testament comes forth, is, what does it say of the miracles of the ancient faith; what authority does it give to the record as a supernatural revelation? Upon this subject the translator is more explicit than the author, since the latter does not affirm, whilst the former seems to deny any miraculous interpositions of God. De Wette treats of the several books under the three heads, *theocratical-historical*, *theocratical-inspired*, and *poetic* books. The first two heads comprise the Law and the Prophets. Without undertaking to decide dogmatically upon the truth of the miraculous sanctions of the Law, or the supernatural illumination of the Prophets, he holds these subjects up in such a light, as to leave us in little doubt, regarding his opinions. He states, that every cultivated mind must at least have some doubt of the Mosaic miracles, and refers them to early tradition, without pretending to judge critically of the grounds of each tradition. He looks upon the theocracy as an established power, ascribes to its officers or members the authorship of the Mosaic books, without entering into minute discussion of the authority of the theocracy. His use of the word *Mythology*, in reference to the Old Testament miracles, hardly admits of the broad significance, which the translator seems to place upon it; and by no means amounts to a denial of original fact, as the basis of tradition.

As the most important points that are treated, the author's view of the Pentateuch and the Prophets demands our attention. He regards the Pentateuch as the theocratical epic poem of the Israelites, without denying that there is an historical basis at the bottom. He does not ascribe the authorship to Moses, nor any one writer, but to various compilers. He follows out the path of criticism begun by Eichhorn, and separates the document in which God is spoken of as Elohim, and that in which he is called Jehovah. He ascribes the authorship of the Elohistic document to some writer in the time of Samuel or Saul, that is, about four hundred years after Moses. He sees traces in the Jehovistic document of an age after David. He assigns the work of the final compiler, the authorship of the book of Deuteronomy, to a period still later, after Solomon, to

the times of Josiah, when the unity of worship was first carried out. It is not for us to dismiss, with a word of contempt, a theory which is sustained with such apparent candor and vast learning. We must all acknowledge that the Pentateuch was not finished in the time of Moses, since it records his death. Yet the view, which attributes the idea of the work, and its principal execution, to the great law-giver, seems encumbered with far less difficulty, and much more accordant with the nature of things. That Moses should not leave some permanent record of his laws, it is hard for us to believe. He did not legislate for a day, but for ages. The explanation given by Dr. Palfrey, of the obvious difficulty in attributing the Pentateuch to Moses, is far more satisfactory than the subtle conjectures of more ambitious critics. We are not afraid, moreover, to lean much upon the word of him who declared, that he came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets; nor are we disposed to regard an epic poem as a likely work for the appointed Messiah to be sent into the world to fulfil. Indeed, the revelation may be one thing and the record of it another thing; we may believe in the authority of the Mosaic law, and yet admit that human hands have added to the divine work. But De Wette's hypothesis throws too much uncertainty upon the whole Pentateuch to accord with the declarations of our Saviour, or to give us any adequate idea of the genuine plans of the great law-giver. Yet he by no means robs it of all sanctity, as the infidel does. For he believes in a historic basis, and regards the superstructure rather as the work of faith than of fraud.

Of course his view of the Pentateuch gives us a clue to his view of the Prophets, since the Mosaic books contain some of the most important prophecies. The prophet he regards as the inspired teacher of the theocracy, differing in this respect from the theocratic historian. "The former, occupied with quiet contemplation of the past, gives rather the true picture of affairs, than his own view of them; but the latter, impelled by his active participation in the present, and in the yet unformed future, living in the fire of inspiration and of holy zeal, expresses his own thoughts, demands, and wishes, cares, and hopes, rather than paints the history of his time." De Wette by no means adopts the rationalistic view, that the prophetic books were written subsequent to the events of which they treat. He regards the prophets as actually seers of the future, not indeed by a particular inspiration regarding a few especial events, but

by a higher intuition of divine truth, and by that of the course of earthly events, both past and future, and by virtue of which they were prophets and foretellers of the future. Yet in the application of this idea to particular prophecies the author rather disappoints us. Instead of regarding the splendid passages in which Isaiah describes the glory, that is to dawn upon the people, as predictions of our Saviour's coming, he refers them to the reign of Cyrus, the restorer of Jerusaleim, and is not willing to attribute their authorship to Isaiah. We cannot surrender the evidence of the spirit to that of philological subtleties, nor be satisfied with the reasoning that robs us of the glories of the evangelical prophet. The exalted tone of those passages must indicate a higher theme than the Persian monarch, and leads us to believe that the striking coincidences between the prophecy and Christ's mission are not merely accidental. Without drawing too largely upon our credulity, we may take a view of the prophecies of the Messiah, which preserves their sanctity, whilst it does not regard the prophets as the mechanical mouth-pieces of dark sayings. Carry out the doctrine of a higher intuition stated by our author, of the elevation of the spontaneous over the reflective reason, and we may regard the prophets as raised into such communion with the divine mind, as to recognise the higher laws of the divine government, have intimations of spiritual truths in advance of their age, and to be favored with glimpses of the new dispensation in the gospel. We know very well, that it is dangerous to substitute theories for facts, and slight the evidence of the letter in order to further our views of the significance of the spirit. But, perhaps from our own dulness, we see no sufficient evidence of the opposition of a just criticism of the leading Messianic prophecies to the above view of the illumination of the prophets. No respectable scholar needs to be informed, that the name prophet does not necessarily indicate a seer of the future. But it is not on this word, that we would base our view of the predictions of the Old Testament.

Passing from the prophets to the poets of the Old Dispensation, we find ourselves more on terms of agreement with our author. He is admirably fitted for the office of critic of poetry in all its forms. Adding such poetic taste to such critical knowledge, he has done important service to the scholar, in opening the riches of the sacred poets, especially by his various works upon the Psalms. His ideas upon the rhythm of those noble

lyrics have, we believe, the merit of originality as well as good sense. By temperament our author is better adapted to be a critic of the poetical than of the theocratical books, since he abounds in imagination, and has comparatively little of the practical, executive turn of mind, that would lead him to trace out, with love, the workings of a system based upon divine authority, and acting through an established priesthood.

We have hardly glanced in this notice at the main points of Mr. Parker's volumes, and must now leave the subject with a few words upon the general impression produced by the book. Nothing is said in its pages powerful enough to shake the received doctrine of liberal Christians, that the Old Testament is a record of a divine revelation, although not a verbal revelation itself. Notwithstanding the many departures of the author from generally received opinions, and his evident skepticism as to many views, that are held sacred by all denominations of Christians in this country, he has nothing of the low infidel spirit, that would rob the ancient Scriptures of their spirituality, and regard them as a tissue of falsehoods. Even where he recognises mythology rather than history, he traces the origin of the myth rather to poetic fancy or credulous belief, than to wilful deceit. Nevertheless the book will fail to satisfy those of us, who believe that Jesus Christ came in the fulness of time to fulfil the Law and the Prophets. We must still wait for a work that shall unite with a criticism, equally minute and learned, more regard for the unity of revelation, more reference to the Word manifest in the flesh, to which the Law guides us as a schoolmaster. From Hengstenberg, and such devourers of marvels, we pray to be delivered; and not a few of our Orthodox brethren entertain the same feeling regarding them. Yet we believe, that without resting in his monstrous dogmatism, we may find a good and rational resting place, without going as far as De Wette and his translator. One consoling thought is, that we are not called upon to solve every problem in the criticism of the Old Testament. Standing on that mount of spiritual vision, where the Light of the World shines upon us, we can look back upon past ages, and see the divine ray gilding every important prominence, without feeling ourselves obliged to explore every cave and valley among the mountains. We must insist upon the duty and the privilege of judging all previous words of revelation by him, who is to us the eternal Word. The first chapter of John's Gospel is worth libraries of

criticism, in the interpretation of the aim of the Old Testament.

In conclusion, we must thank Mr. Parker for the labor he has bestowed upon his work, and for the rich stores of learning he has opened. May all the heresies, that are imported into this country from Germany, come attended thus with instruction enough to be an antidote to their own errors, and with enough of labored argument and spiritual purpose to baffle those, who may be seeking additions to their stock of flippant witticisms. Should the publication by its ability and extravagance call forth some master mind in opposition to its doctrines, who shall unite equal freedom with more of faith, our obligation to Mr. Parker will be greatly enhanced.

S. O.

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#### CENSORIOUS SPEECH.

SPEECH is the mightiest instrument of man's power. Speech is the manifestation of his soul, and in that his power lies, and from that his power comes. It is the exponent of his inward faculties, of his reason, of his imagination, of his affections, and of his will. By speech these faculties are extended; by speech their results are perpetuated and are preserved. Speech is the great intermediate agency between man's ideas, and man's achievements; the medium which communicates thought, and the impulse which communicates action. Speech is embodied in all that men have done, and *lives* in all that men are doing. The glory of speech is, therefore, co-extensive with the glory of mind; and by whatever we estimate the glory of the one, we estimate the glory of the other. It would be pleasant exceedingly, to pursue this train of reflection; but it would not be expedient, for the purpose of the present paper requires me to circumscribe my subject within humbler limits.

Some remarks, which I intend to make on the sins of the tongue, will have but slight reference to the more heinous offences of the class. This would be indeed a boundless field. Who could indicate even the prominent aspects in such a wilderness of

transgression? All that darkens man, and all that maddens him, and all that curses him, has been made instrumental in words. Words have awakened the terrors of superstition, and inflamed the rage of bigotry, and unsheathed the sword of fanaticism, and spread wide the insanity of persecution. Words have been the breath of war, and from the death of Abel until now, that has been a breath of hatred and desolation. Words have perpetuated wrong in unrighteous laws; recorded evil for the unborn; stamped infamy on the guiltless; and blurred the handwriting of God with the wickedness of man. Words have darkened counsel, and perverted judgment; and falsehood has been spoken where only truth should enter; and the sophistries of self-interest have triumphed against the cause of the poor, and the declamations of ambition against the interest of millions. Words, sent out as on the winds, by the modern Press, if in many ways the messengers of knowledge and freedom, are also messengers of dissension, of anger, of misrepresentation, of intemperate severity, of railing accusation; violating the sanctity of character and the decencies of life. Words, under the guidance of genius, which fears not to desecrate the highest boon of heaven, become moulded in a vicious literature, which, false in principle and false in purpose, wins the fancy, but corrupts the heart. Strongly, the apostle has said of the tongue, " therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men who are made after the similitude of God;" — but how often is the blessing merely in the word, while the cursing is perfect in the deed.

It is, however, necessary, while we condemn the faults of speech, that we do not restrain its honest freedom. Speech, possibly, may give pain to the present, and may not be all that the absent would desire. Still, it may be void of malice and of guilt, and be only what in justice should be spoken. Constantly our minds are passing judgments on every thing within the region of their inspection, and these judgments cannot always be in silence, and they ought not to be. Such judgments cannot in every instance be favorable, and to demand their suppression, when they are not, would be a rigor more intolerable than that of the Inquisition. This would utterly destroy all manly opinion, and all honest expression. Cant would take the place of candor, and dissimulation of frankness. True charity abhors results like these; for true charity lives with liberty, and liberty is but an empty name, when it is not the emanation of independent thought. Distinct opinion is the proper consequence of

intellectual independence ; clear expression is the proper consequence of distinct opinion ; and though these may occasionally bear hard on men in disapproval, yet, when integrity is in the motive, the privilege must not be resigned, and should not be condemned. The interests of truth and the dignity of intercourse, the faith of our social nature and the implied trust of our social relations, demand that under legitimate conditions, we shall give aloud the verdict which our reason dictates, whether to others it be pleasant or be painful. To this, character and talents must alike be subject. If the sentence be unfavorable ; if it be unjust as well as unfavorable ; if it depreciates our worth or underrates our ability ; conscious rectitude and conscious power may well sustain us against it ; while time and a more impartial tribunal will make manifest its error. If, however, the sentence be correct, if it censures that in which we merit blame, or if it reduces talents below the level, on which self-love or flattery had placed them ; we must charge our misfortune on the wrong by which we have deserved the censure, or on the delusion which we willingly encouraged. Humility then befits us more than anger ; for anger would be only the irritation of self-righteousness, or the writhing of wounded vanity. " 'T is conscience makes cowards of us all ;" and it is in that cowardice we shrink from the judgment of our neighbor, as well as from the judgment of our God ; at the same time, that neighbor should never forget, under what a responsibility he forms his judgment, and at what a risk, to his brother and to himself, he utters it. Yet, even, from the judgment of an enemy we can derive profit ; his censure may arouse us to correct the faults of our characters, and his criticism may direct us to remove deficiencies in our minds. The judgment of enemy or friend is of inestimable profit to us, if it breaks the spell of deceptions which misguide us ; if it lead us from misty shadows into open light ; if in connexion with upright intention, it stimulate us to be what we ought to be, and nourish within us the modest and magnanimous desire, to be estimated only for what we are.

The words, which do most evil, are seldom those which are spoken from reflection. Words are uttered in our daily intercourse, without scruple and even without consciousness, which sow the seeds of spiritual disease, and eat into the heart of our moral life. Out of all the forms of idle words, which constitute the base currency of social interchange, I will confine my observation to that which is most common — censorious

conversation. I place this among forms of idle words, not because no effect is produced, but because no effect is intended. The speakers are rarely serious for good or evil. They aim at no powerful impression on those who listen; they think of no permanent result; as unimportant is the whole matter to them, as if their ideas were as evanescent in the memory, as their words are on the air. As no good or evil is contemplated for the hearers, neither is there for the subject. So far from anticipating any influence on the person of whom they speak, they do not even suppose, that the person will ever know what they have said. And, if subsequently they should discover, that remarks made in reckless indifference did such a person a very grievous injury, their hearts would smite them with most unfeigned remorse. If that person should meet them, and repeat with literal exactness phrases, which played fluently on the lip, which came flippantly from the tongue, which seemed almost without a meaning and without a purpose, they would blush with deepest shame, to think they could have been so cruelly thoughtless, and they would startle with alarm at a pregnant force of import, which until now they had overlooked.

The insidious manner, in which censoriousness steals into conversation, admits no originality of thought in our statement, and no novelty of example in our illustration. In every age, in every country, in every class of life, the spirit is consistent with itself; and under all possible diversities of custom, its modes of operation are essentially alike. The censorious temper does not always know its own character, and after long habit becomes fatally blind to its inherent vice, until it arrives at last at that worst stage of a reprobate sense, the facility of transgression, and the loss of feeling. But in every gradation it is true to a law of delusion or disguise. It would not say even to itself what it is, and much less would it appear so to others. It seldom openly asserts; generally it cautiously insinuates. And the forms of its insinuation answer to all combinations of thought, and all combinations of language. I must omit from this comprehensive assertion such combinations, as imply directness and simplicity; for to avoid these, censoriousness modifies its phraseology with exhaustless ingenuity. You will hear a sentence commenced with warm praise of some absent person, and then tapered off with such diminishing of exception, that the eulogy has evaporated, while each qualification has left a portion of venom in its stead. Perhaps, the insinuation takes the form of

a question ; and then the question is so shaped, that it prompts curiosity, and requires an answer, which only the asker of it is expected to give. The reply is suggestive, and leads to comment ; corroboration follows, the interest deepens with participation, until there is nothing more to add. Frequently a conversation of this description originates with a moral reflection, and the philosophy of the text is maintained by references to such individuals, as may come into memory opportunely for the purpose. Invidious allusions are often connected with a seemingly profound compassion, a compassion, which mourns exceedingly that such sad concerns should exist in life, which does not pass by a wounded reputation, as the Priest and Levite did the wounded traveller; but puts a tongue in every gaping scar, that all may know its misery ; a compassion, which is so zealous to establish a cause for pity and for grief, that it enumerates minutely every circumstance, which can exaggerate a fault, and leaves no incident unnoted, which heightens a transgression. Then, there is the surprise, that it should be thus ; and the hands are lifted up in wonder ; and many impressive moralizings are uttered on the inconsistency of human nature, and the uncertainty of human action ; sometimes these things are said with a profession of interest for the subject, in a manner, however, which implies he does not deserve it. At other times, some real or supposed offender is mentioned with a positiveness, that admits no contradiction, and with a virtuous indignation, which implies how great is the depravity, that provokes it. Yet on closer inspection, we are often led to marvel what evidence justified this positiveness, or what crime could inflame such indignation. A mere whisper, a suspicion, a surmise, a vague report, you will hear reiterated with asseverations of doubt, that serve only to confirm it. I have heard such a matter as a fact, a person will say, but I don't believe it. But there is no sincerity in this tone ; so you take the fact, and you throw aside the disclaimer. "I cannot think it is true," he will add ; yet he seems not sorry, if it were ; and then again, "there must be something in it ; it is a matter too serious for invention ; it certainly came from respectable authority ; from individuals, I am told, who had the means of knowing, and are incapable of falsehood ; it has, moreover, gained credit from some whom it would be difficult to make the dupes of imposition." This seeming hesitation establishes others in conviction. It is needless to pursue this train of illustration to any greater length ;

enough has been said to call up recollections from experience, much more to the purpose.

They are rare persons and wise, who pass through society entirely free from those subtle sins of speech, on which I have thus remarked ; and they, who are clear from them, either by agency or participation, are indeed as happy as they are wise. But these sins are so covert, that we mark not their approach, and they are so common, that even their presence creates no alarm. Few of us escape them ; and there is so much of mutual implication, that there must be mutual tolerance. The invisible tempter is present in every group of idle talkers ; and gradually this deceiving spirit carries them along from nonsense to malice. They are not aware of the evil ; they suspect not the injury with which they have been ensnared ; they feel not the disease which it generates in their moral being. Keeping strictly within the circle of social decorum, they incur no penalty of social expulsion ; they are branded with no disgrace ; they are subjected to no infamy. They are consequently at ease, and ease becomes insensibility. And why this apathy, this deadness of the moral sense ? Is it, that there is nothing here, that should stir and sting it ? There is indeed sufficient, if men would but consider, to cover each of us with shame and confusion of face. Let us look fairly, then, at the bad qualities of mind and heart, which censorious speech implies, and the vital injuries, which it inflicts ; and whether we consider its origin or its effects, we shall cease to regard it otherwise than a heinous sin, a violation of principle, an opposition to the divine law of charity, the law of Christ, the law of God.

Censorious speech implies states of the mind and states of the heart, either latent or developed, which are ignoble or unworthy. If I should take a condition of mind, which seems scarcely to infer direct guilt, that of mere emptiness ; yet what can be more ignoble in a human, an immortal being, with so many claims of thought and duty, with all the solemn interests and mysteries that hedge in his life, than to have little for conversation but his neighbor's character, and to have little for that but censure ? But commonly the offence implies conditions of mind more positively wrong, than that of emptiness. Vanity is often present. When we set our neighbor at a disadvantage, there is an unexpressed distinction which exalts ourselves ; and in the silence of our mean exaltation, we take the Pharisee's place, and we conceive the Pharisee's prayer.

And when vanity is present, presumption, which is its associate folly, will not be absent. We speak in the levity of rebuke, because we forget, for the time, our own frailty ; we do not call to mind the things in which we have offended, or we do not realize the danger to which temptation may at any moment expose us ; we do not weigh the importance of different influences and circumstances, and thus silence inward flattery, by feeling how vastly the comparison might have been against us, had ours been another position. The envy of a jealous spirit, which is yet worse than vanity, not unfrequently assumes the words of plausible objection, or cautious condemnation. Envy, whose very nature is sinister, must naturally disguise itself ; and as humility shrinks from the acknowledgment of its own goodness, so envy starts from the recognition of its own malice : it must of necessity be counterfeit ; it must hide its pain, it must conceal its satisfaction, it dares not ask for sympathy in its grief, for its grief is against merit ; it dares not ask for sympathy in its enjoyment, for its enjoyment is over the fallen. But to pass from motives, so insidious and so base as this, the tendency to censoriousness is not consistent with the free action of any noble sentiment. It implies — I will not say habitually, but for the instant — it implies a want of earnest feeling ; for under the power of such feeling, none could trifle with brethren in what is dearest and most sacred. It implies a want of sympathetic imagination ; for with such imagination, directed by moral principle, we should put ourselves in the place of our neighbor, and we should give unto him that, which we wish should be given unto us. It implies the want of generosity ; for the generous are upright, and they are merciful ; and the upright will be lenient to the absent, lest they should condemn the innocent ; the merciful will be lenient to the absent, whether they are innocent or guilty ; if innocent, because they have no means of defence, and if guilty, because they have the more need of forbearance. The censorious spirit manifests wretched and wrong states of heart ; and it is from such wretched and wrong states of heart only, it can find a response or a sympathy. It has, therefore, a double degradation ; it is not merely empty, vain, presumptuous, envious, unfeeling, unsympathizing, and ungenerous in itself, but a stimulant to such passions in others ; their minister and their pander. Nor is it simply that the censorious spirit originates in evil qualities ; it tends to destroy good ones. It violates simplicity, for it is ambiguous, sophistical,

double-minded. It breaks down the integrity of the conscience ; it turns thought aside from an honest, direct, and straight-forward course. It renders men uncandid, cowardly, and unjust. They shrink from the fair meaning of their words ; they fear to avow it ; they will not acknowledge it ; or in the pride of impenitent assertion, they use every art to maintain it. They shun the object of their censure, or they assume a false bearing towards him ; or they hate him as an enemy ; they deceive him, or they persecute him ; for the issue of injustice in word is injury in action ; and once to injure a man is a sure way to hate him. I do not say, that matters always go to this extreme ; but this is their direction, and we must not close our eyes to the catastrophe. Nor is the evil of a censorious spirit exhausted on itself, and on its objects ; it operates unfavorably on all that come into contact with it. The mere listeners to hard sayings, however impartial, or however prudent, do not escape unhurt. There is that which they cannot resist, which they cannot repel ; which, in fact, they cannot exclude from their attention ; that, which, true or false, they wish they had not heard ; their minds are disturbed, perplexed, unsettled ; painful associations are implanted in their memory, and the result in their experience is discomfort and distress. And these influences spread in their respective circles through the community, undermining trust, freedom, nature, and substituting, for the genial graces of a true heart, the cold formalities of custom, caution, and suspicion.

What can counteract these evils ? Not mere worldly prudence, not mere intellectual culture. It is true, that worldly prudence would constrain our speech ; but it would also constrain our sympathies. It is true, that mental culture might render us thoughtless of our neighbor's failings ; but it might also render us indifferent to our neighbor's welfare. It is true, that worldly prudence would lead us to mind our own affairs ; but also it might harden us to the afflictions of our brethren. It is true, that mental culture would exalt us above petty gossip ; it might also withdraw us from simple duties. This must not be. Our speech must not be restricted, but enlightened ; our sympathies must not be limited, but enlarged ; our own concerns must not be neglected, neither must our brother's need ; we must be above petty gossip, but yet we must have hearts awake to ordinary incidents and humble cares. The power, which we need, we shall find effectually in Christianity. We must recognise the Christian law ; we must cultivate the Christian senti-

ment. If we recognise the Christian law, we shall regard sin in its nature and in its essence, and we shall hate it, not according to its social penalties, but according to its inward wrong. From this point of view we shall discern, that scorn, and contempt, and imprisonment, and bonds, do not completely measure the guilt of transgression. We shall discern, that we may not incur these, yet be spiritually worse than many that endure them ; that the enactments of man may not have wherewithal to charge us, and yet the perfect law of God find us deeply culpable ; we shall not be satisfied, that we are free from the disgrace of perjury, or the shame of theft ; we shall discern the wickedness of an evil temper and of a bitter tongue. We shall apprehend, how unholy, how ungodly, how anti-Christian, is a spirit void of charity, void of love ; and in comparison with many a hapless wretch, whom the world treads down with scorn, we shall abhor ourselves in dust and ashes. If with the recognition of the Christian law of duty, we cultivate the Christian sentiment of love, what we acknowledge to be true, and what we feel to be good, will both unite to exalt and purify our conversation. The mean passions, which generate ungentle speech, still less that which is malignant and untrue, could not live in the nobleness of a Christian soul. In the glory of that light, which streams from the face of Jesus, vanity and envy must be extinguished ; in the flames of his disinterested affections, anger and hatred must be consumed. This noble Christian soul, enrobed in the modesty, the meekness, the mercy, and the purity of its master, has ideas, feelings, and interests, which comport not with the grovellings of evil words. In the degree, then, to which our souls are Christian, we shall forsake the beggarly elements, which form much of our idle or injurious conversation ; our intellects, accustomed to contemplate grand and solemn themes, will shrink from unworthy topics ; familiar in their meditations with ideas of the perfect and the eternal, they can have no sympathy with those vain babblings, in which valuable portions of life are not only wasted, but desecrated. Our feelings, softened and enlarged by the spirit of the gospel, will be at once mild and magnanimous ; in the plenitude of a Christlike bosom, no asperity will find nutriment to sustain it ; we shall be true to our friends, and we shall not be ungenerous to our enemies, if enemies we should have. And cheerfulness need not be banished ; we need not cloud the path of life, nor clothe our faces in gloom, nor rebuke the buoyancy of delight, nor silence the laugh of health,

nor walk our way in lamentation to the grave, as if happiness were sin, and misery were merit ; but in mirth we will not forget reverence, and in gayety we will not dishonor charity. With intellects thus uplifted, and feelings thus inspired, worthy interests will engage our thoughts and words. Why should our subjects of speech be so barren, that we must seek for malice to give them zest ? Why should we come together with such meagre fancies and such starved affections ? It need not be so ; it ought not to be so : if we are just to our natures, and true to our opportunities, it will not be so. To say nothing of those interests, which belong to the indulgence of refined pursuits, of uncorrupted tastes ; to say nothing of those which study opens to us in whatever the teachers of our race have written for our learning ; there are those which can engage us in every place, in every condition, and which, while they engage, will sanctify us ; there are those of nature, wherever the sky hangs over us, wherever earth has a leaf, or a flower, or a sound of gladness ; and for those we need but open senses, content, and health ; there are those of duty, of philanthropy, of brotherly kindness, and those meet us daily within the threshold, and in the most limited neighborhood, open a field for earnest thinking, and for active work.

This grand faculty of speech is sacred, and should not be profaned. It is that by which bards from the olden time have given out the sweet music which lay within their souls, the music which has an answer for ever in the bosom of humanity. It is that by which sages in every generation have taught wisdom to their race, and by which their race have marched along from stage to stage of progress. It is that by which the bold and the free spirits, who have a hearing through the world, have poured out the eloquence, which is the very life-breath of liberty ; by which thoughts of power have gone forth, as from tongues of fire, to smite the rod of the tyrant, and to melt the chains of the slave ; to vindicate the cause of the helpless and the wronged ; to cry in piercing tones for neglected sorrow, until humanity has been shaken from its apathy, and compelled to look with pity on the afflicted. Speech is sacred, for it resembles creation, which is the speech of God : " day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no place where their voice is not heard : their words are to the end of the world." The mind of God is syllabled in the sighs of the wind, in the noise of the ocean ; its letters are stars and suns. Speech

is sacred ; for it is speech that makes known the inspiration, which God puts in the hearts of his chosen, and which comes to us from deserts and from caves, in the sublime burden of prophecy, and in the softer accents of sacred song. Speech is sacred ; for by speech God through Christ has been revealed to the world, as he was never known before ; and by speech the fulness of divine excellence, which dwelt in the perfect soul of Christ himself, is made manifest for our salvation. The multitudes wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth ; let not bitterness come from the hearts of his disciples ; let us with a loving docility be often in his presence, until we shall be filled with the abundance of his spirit, and out of that abundance speak.

H. G.

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## PHILOSOPHY OF REFORMATION.

[From the Manuscripts of the late Rev. Noah Worcester, DD.]

As mankind while here on earth are forming their characters for a future state, and as "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," reformation must be to us all a business of the highest importance. I use the word reformation in preference to repentance, as including all that is implied in a cordial and practical obedience to the precept "Cease to do evil, learn to do well," or in turning from the ways of sin by obedience to the self-denying precepts of the Messiah. But as reformation presupposes a sinful state, or evil practices to be corrected, to understand the philosophy of reformation it seems necessary, that we should have some correct views of the philosophy of disobedience, or how and why men transgress the laws of their Maker. Besides, as both disobedience and reformation result from, or consist in voluntary exercises of the mind, we are naturally led to inquire first of all respecting the philosophy of volition,—how volition is produced, why men choose this or that, and prefer one thing to another. And, as what we

call disposition and habit are justly regarded as having a powerful influence in forming the moral character, both in the course of disobedience and reformation, the philosophy of disposition and habit will require a distinct consideration. I shall therefore consider the subject under several distinct heads.

### I. The philosophy of volition.

Volition is a word of the same meaning as choice. Volitions, then, are acts of the mind by which things are chosen or preferred. They may be called executive acts of the will or faculty of choosing. We may have different objects or different courses of conduct in view at the same time. More than one of them may appear in some respects agreeable or disagreeable; but all things considered, one is preferred to all the others. This preference is the choice or volition.

When we look back to the state of infancy, we may see reason to believe, that children are capable of volition before they are capable of moral agency. Volitions may therefore be divided into two classes, *animal* and *moral*; and the moral volitions may be subdivided into *virtuous* and *vicious*, or sinful and holy.

By animal volitions, I mean those which result from the animal properties of our nature, without any reference to a moral law, or to moral light respecting what is right and wrong. Children have animal senses, appetites, propensities, and passions, from which animal wants and desires originate,—and consequently volitions to supply those wants, or to gratify those desires. In the class of animal volitions I should include the volitions of children which are prior to moral agency; and it seems to me reasonable that very many of their volitions should be assigned to this class, after they become moral beings. That this is a correct view of the subject may be more evident, when we consider the additional pre-requisites to moral agency. But before I bring these to view I will quote a passage from the "Christian Spectator," which contains ideas in accordance with what I have expressed; —

"But there are in the constitution of the mind certain properties, tendencies, or principles, which lie back of moral action, and belong to us simply as intellectual and sentient beings. Of this class are the natural appetites, as hunger and thirst, the social affections, as love of children, sensibility to the opinions of others, a feeling of injury when wronged, sympathy with

the sufferings of others, &c., and connected with them all is the desire of happiness, which belongs to us in common with all sentient beings. Now these, from the nature of the case, are neither sinful nor holy. They result from the inevitable condition of our being; and we can no more cease to be the subjects of them than we can cease to exist. All that is demanded by the claims of duty is to keep them in strict subjection to the rights of other beings, to our obligations to God and our fellow-men."

— *Christian Spectator for June, 1829*, pp. 312, 313.

In view of the foregoing passage, may it not be justly said, so long and so far as our volitions result from these animal properties, uninfluenced by moral light or moral considerations, they are merely animal volitions — of the same nature as the properties from which they result, and neither sinful nor holy? These properties may be necessary to our existence as human beings, and may account for a vast portion of human volitions; yet something more is necessary to moral agency, or to render our volitions morally good or morally evil. We may therefore now bring to view the *prerequisites to moral volition*.

The animal properties, as we have seen, may rationally account for animal wants and the consequent animal volitions to supply those wants. It is also to be observed that these animal properties have an influence in exciting volitions of a moral nature. For they are properties which pertain to us through life; and, like the tongue and the hands, they are convertible to moral purposes, both good and evil. The animal volitions imply the faculties of *perception* and *memory*; but to render our actions of a moral nature we must possess reason and conscience, and more or less of moral light — a knowledge of moral right and wrong. Without these no human being can be a moral agent, and no volition or action can be morally good or morally evil.

For every moral evil there must be some cause, occasion, or reason of its occurrence. The same faculties and properties may be requisite in both cases. He who has a capacity to do right has a capacity to do wrong. It requires no higher faculties, nor more of moral light in the one case than in the other. If a person knows, what is morally right, he knows, what is morally wrong; and so far as he is ignorant in respect to moral light, he is incapable of doing either good or evil in a moral sense of the words.

Moral volitions are to us vastly more interesting than animal volitions ; because, for the former we are accountable. Yet the philosophy of both classes of moral volitions seems to be very much enveloped in darkness or mystery.

2. Brief view of the philosophy of sinful volitions.

As reformation presupposes a state of disobedience, it may be of great use to have some correct views of the philosophy of the disobedient course ; for this may help us to a clearer understanding of the philosophy of reformation. How then may we account for the fact, that children are so generally seen in the path of disobedience, as to need reformation ?

Many have supposed that all sinful actions must proceed from a sinful cause — and that children sin because they come into the world with a sinful nature. But it appears to me, that the first of these hypotheses may be shown to be palpably false,— and the second as palpably unnecessary to account for the sinfulness of children.

That the first sin could not have had an evil cause, may be evident from the following considerations. It was either eternal, or it was not. If eternal, it had no cause. If not eternal, it must have had a good cause or none ; or in other words, it must have been that of a good being ; for no evil cause could precede the first sin. It is generally supposed that Adam, or the first of our race, was for a time a good man, and without sin. Let this supposed fact be admitted, and it will follow, that his first sin must have been the volition or act of one, who had up to that moment been a sinless and holy being. If then Adam could sin without a previous sinful nature, so it may have been with all his posterity.

Our first parents were liable to sin, because they possessed such animal properties and were placed in such a situation, as exposed them to a state of trial or temptation ; and because they had the power to choose their own ways. It is surely reasonable to suppose that our first parents were possessed of all the animal properties which are common to their posterity. These properties are not in themselves evil. On the contrary, they are favors bestowed by a kind Father to render mankind capable of enjoyment and usefulness. Yet we know from our own experience that our senses, appetites, and passions, often expose us to temptation. It is so with the best of men through life. When they see objects to which they have no right, that excite their animal or fleshly desires, they are in a state of trial

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or temptation. Their integrity and firmness are brought to the test in proportion as the prohibited objects appear to them desirable. Something was prohibited to our first parents which was seen by them as highly pleasing and desirable ; and so strong were their appetites or propensities for what was forbidden, that they yielded to the temptation, and probably in the hope of impunity. By yielding to the craving of animal desires, instead of resisting the temptation and denying themselves, they became transgressors in the sight of the Lord. Had no desires been excited by beholding the forbidden objects, there would have been no temptation, and had they resisted the temptation instead of yielding to it, the volition so to do would have been a virtuous act of self-denial.

The posterity of Adam have all come into the world in a state of infancy. They have such animal properties as exposed Adam to temptation. For a considerable time prior to moral agency, they are in the habit of freely indulging these animal properties ; and they become attached to many objects of gratification. It is very gradually that their moral faculties are developed, and that they obtain moral light, or ideas of right and wrong. Suppose that from its birth up to this day a child has had no ideas of moral right or wrong,—during all that time his actions have been unrestrained by conscience or moral light ; and his appetites and passions have acquired considerable strength. To-day he is capable of receiving moral light in a few particular cases, and has a conscience to dictate what he should do, or forbear to do. But the way, which conscience dictates, is to him a way of self-denial. He now understands that something, which he wants to please his fancy or to gratify his appetite, belongs to another person,—and that it would be wrong for him to take it without leave. It is easy to see that this is a state of trial and temptation. To do right, he must cease to do as he had hitherto done. By fidelity and kindness on the part of his parents, in precept and example, the child may be easily induced to obey the dictates of conscience. But if he has in them the examples of disobedience, *his* appetites and *their* influence will probably occasion him to violate the dictates of conscience. If not led astray by his parents, he may be induced to violate their command by the influence of companions. By such influence children are often led astray, who have faithful parents.

Children have not only strong appetites and passions, but they have an imitative instinct by which they are induced to follow the examples of others. I indeed hope and believe that there is a greater amount of virtue in the world, and a much greater number of children who have become virtuous by being trained up in the way they should go, than many of my fellow Christians imagine. Still, when I take into view the animal properties of children, and the extent to which their moral education has been neglected, and the amount of evil instruction and example to which they are exposed, I think we may account for the fact, that so large a portion of children grow up in habits of vice and irreligion, and for the lamentable extent of human depravity in the world.

By proper attention to acknowledged facts, in regard to the prevalence of the vice of intemperance in the use of strong drink, we may find ample proof, that an hereditary sinful nature is not necessary to account for human transgressions.

Not more perhaps than one child in a hundred is so unfortunate as to be born with an appetite for strong drink. Yet by seeing others drink it, and hearing their praises of it, and their expressions of pleasure, the imitative instinct and the curiosity of children may be so excited, that they may be induced to taste a little mixed with water and sweetened. Such may be the first step. Then they may be encouraged to sip a little from the bottom of the glass, as often as they are present to see their parents or others drink. Thus an appetite for the liquor may be gradually formed, which shall be continually acquiring strength as the children advance in years, until they become habitual drunkards. The first time the child becomes drunk, he may be greatly alarmed, and may think he will be more careful in future. But the hour for drinking returns, and all his alarm perhaps may be soon drowned in the pleasures of tippling. A disposition and habit are thus formed, by which conscience is violated, and the wretch becomes bound over to perdition. Thus other vices may be commenced, and other dispositions and habits formed. Imprudence, or the want of care on the part of parents and others, may be the occasion of ruin to children who once bid fair to be useful members of society. How careful then should parents be to teach their children how to govern the appetites with which they are born; and to preserve them from forming others of a still more dangerous character. I say still more dangerous, because the acquired appetites

appear to have a greater power and control than any appetites which are purely natural or animal. Witness the appetite for strong drink and tobacco, which are certainly acquired.

### 3. The philosophy of reforming volitions.

No subject, it is believed, of equal importance to our race, has been involved in more obscurity and mystery than the one now proposed. This obscurity has probably resulted from the prevalent hypothesis relating to man's depravity, inability, and dependence. As I have known by experience many of the perplexities which result from the prevalent theories, and as I still feel my own liability to err, I shall aim to write with becoming candor and self-diffidence, and at the same time with perspicuity. My present views are in some respects different from any thing I have seen expressed in writing by others. I shall therefore aim to express them clearly, that others may have a fair opportunity to judge of their correctness. In what I shall say on reforming volitions, I shall write in the full belief of our entire dependence on God, and in the belief that "Man's capacity to obey is consistent with dependence, and commensurate with duty."

As all moral actions are voluntary, whether good or evil, reforming volitions are acts in which a transgressor, by choice, ceases to do evil, and learns to do well. These reforming acts imply a conviction that the way of disobedience is evil and dangerous, and that duty and safety demand a change of conduct and of character.

The habitual transgressor has difficulties to encounter and overcome in the work of reformation; but God endows him with the requisite aids of his Spirit, so as to leave him without excuse while he refuses to reform. Among the difficulties to be overcome by the adult transgressor, are what the apostle denominates the "lusts of the flesh"—the desires which result from the animal appetites, propensities, and passions. These have often acquired great strength by unlawful indulgence. To these we may add, as difficulties, acquired appetites, dispositions, and habits. The latter class of difficulties seem to be grafted on the former; and sometimes they are so powerful and inveterate, that they seem to render the sinner's condition nearly hopeless. But these difficulties must be overcome, or the sinner will never be reformed.

In speaking on this subject, I shall have particular reference

to those who live under the light of the Gospel. To enable the sinner to reform, God gives him the inestimable faculties of reason and conscience, to tell him what is right and what is wrong. The conscience is God's monitor and advocate, and the supreme faculty of the soul. In addition to reason and conscience he is endowed with the faculty of volition, to choose his own ways. This faculty enables him to obey the dictates of conscience, to stop in any course of vice, and to choose to do right.

A principal reason why sinners so often carelessly pursue a sinful course is this, they do not *attend* to the subject, or *reflect* on the evil and danger of their ways, and the obligations they are under to cease to do evil and learn to do well. As a remedy for this, God has endowed them with the faculties requisite for *attention* and *reflection*. Whether they will attend and reflect or not, depends on their own choice; for they have power to choose in this case as well as in others. They can choose so to attend to their situation, and so to reflect on the evil of their ways, that they could find no quiet to their consciences in the paths of disobedience.

God also furnishes adequate motives to induce any one to reform, who will duly attend to them, and suitably reflect on their importance. Any motive which God proposes may reasonably have influence on the human mind. Under the Mosaic dispensation, "good and evil" of a temporal nature were principally and abundantly employed, to induce men to cease to do evil and learn to do well. The following is an example. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." But under the Gospel dispensation, which brings life and immortality to light, the motives employed are of far higher importance. For a future retribution is announced according to the deeds done in the body; on the one hand we have the promises of eternal life, and on the other the threatenings of everlasting death.

Now what more is needed as a capacity to obey, or as motives to obedience?

Some persons may here ask, Can the sinner, who is accustomed to do evil, choose a course for which he has no disposition? Can he choose to stop in a course of vice agreeable to his present disposition, until God shall give him a new disposi-

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tion, from which the volition may flow? Is it not impossible for a man to choose a course or an act which is the reverse of his disposition?

In my reply to these queries, let it be understood, that nothing will be intended inconsistent with our entire dependence on God for ability to comply with his commands. By many it will probably be supposed that no satisfactory answer can be given to the queries proposed. For it seems to be a generally received opinion, that it is impossible for the sinner to choose to reform until he shall possess a new disposition. In reference to this hypothesis I would query, How was it possible for Adam and Eve to sin without a new disposition? And are we to suppose that God infused into them a sinful disposition to enable them to transgress, or to choose to disobey his commands? If not, then it is a possible thing for a person to choose contrary to his disposition, and contrary to all preceding volitions.

In whatever way or by whatever means a sinner, under the light of the Gospel, is awakened and caused to attend to his situation, and to reflect on his danger, he is then prepared to listen to the truths of the Gospel, and these are "quick and powerful"; "they are spirit and they are life"; and if duly attended to and received, they have a transforming influence, and operate as motives to obedience. Whether this awakening and attention is excited by an earthquake, a peal of thunder, an attack of some dangerous disease, a remarkable escape from sudden death, the decease of a relative or friend, a single sermon or by a "protracted meeting," the result may be the same.

I have not a doubt, that the exertions for a temperance reformation have occasioned thousands of real conversions, and genuine reformations in other respects; and the facts, which have occurred in the progress of those exertions, may show unquestionably that men have a capacity to choose a course of conduct, directly the reverse of their dispositions and habits. How many myriads of people, who had long been in the habit of what is called temperate drinking, and whose dispositions and habits had acquired great strength, have stopped short in this course, and adopted the principle of total abstinence! And how many thousands of habitual drunkards have followed this example, and this too against the strength of dispositions and habits which had been supposed invincible! Many, it is recorded of each of these classes, have given good evidence of a cordial reformation, and not only joined temperance socie-

ties but Christian churches. Who can pretend that vice has any stronger bands than those, which bind the intemperate man to his intoxicating liquors? Even the habit and disposition which are formed by the daily temperate drinker, are cords not easily broken. But in each class of cases the cords have been broken by vast numbers, by hundreds of thousands of the temperate drinkers; and not less than five thousand reformed drunkards have been reported in the State of New York, besides the many in other States. What a multitude of persons then, in a short time, have by efficacious volitions chosen a course directly contrary to their predominant habits and dispositions!

How then, let it be asked, how was reformation commenced and effected in these cases? Discontinuing the use of strong drink was the effect of choice, of a powerful volition of the mind. The means employed produced in the agents a conviction, that their former course was evil and dangerous; and by the influence of motives they were induced to deny their appetites and dispositions, and to choose the road of total abstinence. But did they, prior to their happy choice, get rid of their appetite and disposition for strong drink? No; they chose to deny that appetite and disposition by adopting the saving principle. Had the appetite and disposition been first removed, and an appetite to loathe the drink been given, there would have been no self-denial in the course they adopted. But now the measure of their self-denial is in proportion to the strength of their appetites. Their choice to reform must have been made by the power of the faculty of willing, and the dictates of conscience and reason, in view of the motives which were presented; and in opposition to the cravings of appetite which had reigned triumphant to the very time of the volition to reform.

If we have learned how men may cease to be drunkards, and how they may avoid forming this character, we may apply the principle and process to all other vices or courses of disobedience. *Total abstinence is the remedy of remedies*, the only one on which full reliance can be placed. Vicious dispositions are acquired by practice, as I hope to show in another place; and if drunkards can choose the path of total abstinence, so can gamblers, liars, thieves, highwaymen, and pirates, indeed every description of transgressors.

In learning to do evil or to do good, men are greatly influenced by associating together. They mutually encourage and

strengthen one another. Whether the cause be good or bad, the greater the number engaged in it, the stronger is the current, and the more powerful the results. This probably will not be denied by any observing and reflecting man.

Thousands of facts might be adduced to prove that men can choose contrary to their predominant and ruling disposition and habit. As the thief can forbear stealing, if he thinks he is liable to immediate detection ; so the man of profane lips can govern his tongue in the presence of men eminent for sanctity ; the most notorious liar can forbear lying and carefully speak the truth, if he is aware that he is suspected and watched ; and even a gang of villains can suspend a projected crime, for which they have a powerful disposition, if they hear that a company of police officers are in pursuit of them. Besides, if men have power thus to choose and suspend acts of wickedness for an hour, a day, or a week, so they can choose to discontinue the same evil courses as long as they shall live. If they may be influenced to suspend acts of vice from an apprehension that they are watched by men, how powerful must be the influence, if they should be brought duly to consider, that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Some, however, may here object, that if men refrain from external acts of vice, and still retain the disposition or appetite, there is no virtue in such self-denial.

This objection involves a metaphysical hypothesis, which in my view is ill-founded, and highly delusive and dangerous ; nor can I doubt that multitudes have been seduced by it to pursue the paths of vice, and to perpetrate atrocious crimes. Let me then observe

1. It tells the intemperate man that, unless he can first get rid of his desire or disposition to drink, it will be useless for him to abstain from the external act of drinking, and adopt the principle of total abstinence. But who does not know, that it is impossible for him immediately to free himself from his thirst for strong drink ? that he cannot do this in any other way at all, but by forming a habit of abstaining from the use of such liquors, and that what is required of him is, to govern his appetite by denying himself and taking up the cross ?

2. Let us apply the principle to the first temptation of our first parents. They saw with their eyes the forbidden fruit. It appeared to them pleasant and desirable ; their natural appetite was excited, they felt the lust of the flesh, or their animal

nature, and a desire to taste was produced by the sight of their eyes. But they were forbidden to eat on the pain of death. They were therefore placed in a state of trial or temptation, by feeling a desire to eat that which God had forbidden. Now what counsel could Satan himself have given in that case worse than to suggest, that inasmuch as they felt the desire to taste the fruit, this was just as bad as to eat of it; and unless they could extirpate their animal appetite, it would be in vain for them to abstain from eating? The truth of the case was this, they were not at all blamable for having such an appetite, or feeling such a desire or propensity to eat. For they could not have been as God made them, without such an appetite, nor been tried or tempted. What was required of them was not to extirpate the appetite, but to govern it according to the prohibition of God, to deny themselves the gratification of eating, when they knew this to be the will of their Maker. Had they done this, they would have overcome in the hour of temptation, and have remained innocent. But by disregarding the dictates of conscience, and obeying a sensual appetite, they became sinners. How often do good men at the present day see things that excite their animal desires, which are to them forbidden fruit? When they are placed in such a situation, denying the calls of appetite is a proof of their uprightness and firmness, such proof as could not be given, had they been devoid of the appetites which are thus excited, and thus denied.

Another metaphysical objection may be expressed in the following manner; that there can be no virtue in abstaining from vicious acts, or in a volition to abstain, if we are influenced so to do by fear of punishment or hope of reward.

In reference to this objection, I would query, Was not the threatening of death to Adam intended by his Maker to operate as a motive to restrain him from eating the forbidden fruit? Are not good and evil, or promises of good and threatening of evil, constantly employed by God, both in the Old Testament and the New, as motives to obedience? If so, I would further ask, were God and his prophets under a mistake as to the motives which might reasonably influence the minds of men? Or can it be admitted, that they acted a delusive part in suggesting such motives? If not, is it not desirable, that public teachers should treat God's example with more deference than some have done? The motives to obedience are many, and some are of higher order than others. The capacities of men, too,

are various, and what may be perceived and felt as a motive by one, may not be so perceived and felt by a weaker brother. Is it not then wise in God to present different motives, and such as may be adapted to the several capacities of men? We may surely rejoice when our fellow-men are induced to abstain from vicious acts by any motives, which our Heavenly Father has seen fit to employ. Such a kind of disinterestedness, as is above all regard to threatenings of evil or promises of good, is very little spoken of in the Bible, and I suspect as little known by experience among men.

To obey conscience is to obey God; and to obey the dictates of conscience in denying our animal appetites, because this is required by God, and because he tells us that evil and danger are in the opposite course, and life and peace in the way of self-denial, is, if I mistake not, obedience to the Gospel. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from iniquity is understanding. Still it may be a truth, that perfect love casteth out fear, and disposes the mind highly enlightened and advanced, to pursue the path of obedience with little thought, either of personal punishment, or reward. A man of high spiritual attainments may with delight do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, while in an exalted degree he may be influenced by such charity as "seeketh not her own."

Those who have been long in the belief, that volitions always proceed from a prior appetite, taste, or disposition, may be slow to admit that the habitual transgressor can exercise a virtuous volition, prior to his having a new and virtuous disposition. Some further remarks and inquiry may therefore be necessary.

1. It may be observed, that volitions are produced by the influence of motives; and the disposition is not the only source from which motives are furnished. In the case of the intemperate man, his appetite for ardent spirits, and his disposition to drink, present the fascinating motive of sensual pleasure or gratification, to induce him to pursue his course, and to refuse to adopt the principle of total abstinence; — this case might be deemed absolutely desperate, were there no other source of motives, — and had he not the power to choose in opposition to his predominant disposition, and prior to the formation of a new disposition. But conscience, in view of the Bible and the course of Providence, can furnish other motives so powerful as to throw the pleasures of drinking into the back ground, and

produce the volition for total abstinence. This has been proved in a multitude of cases. Why then should any one allow himself to reason against facts in support of a favorite hypothesis?

2. I would ask, Does not the Gospel require self-denial? And in what is self-denial to be found, but in a denial of some appetite or disposition, by which we have been led astray, or by which we are exposed to be led astray? Had we no such appetites or dispositions, we should have no occasion "to keep under the body" lest we should be cast away.

3. It is by voluntary acts of honest, resolute, and persevering self-denial that Christians overcome the lusts of the flesh, and form a self-denying disposition and character. The change is often expressed in the Scriptures by the phrase, turning unto God, or turning from evil ways; and sinners are called upon in this language, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" And what is turning but choosing to break off our sins by righteousness, and our iniquities, by obedience to the Gospel? It is by volition that men turn, and in no other manner.

It will probably be thought by many, that experience gives her voice against the hypothesis for which I plead; and that the satisfaction, the joy, and the zeal of many adult converts evince, that they had a new disposition as the source of their reforming volitions. Some may also go so far as to say, that their own experience is against the hypothesis; and that the joy and zeal, which they felt on being satisfied that they had become penitents, were as great, if not greater, than they have felt in any later period of their lives. To this reasoning I reply—

1. Having our volitions accordant with our predominant disposition, is not the only occasion of satisfaction, joy, and zeal; nor is it the best evidence of virtuous volitions, or a humble state of mind. To have our volitions accordant with the dictates of conscience may occasion as great inward satisfaction, as pure joy, and as fervent zeal, as to have them accordant with our disposition. What pleasures are more to be desired, than the pleasures of a good conscience in the sight of God? When a sinner has been not only awakened to a sense of the evil and danger of the course he had been pursuing, but has, in obedience to the dictates of conscience, chosen the path of self-denial, he must then have the pleasures of an approving conscience; and if in this situation he is favored with correct views of the forgiving mercy of God, as revealed by his Son, he will

see ground for joy and rejoicing in the Lord, and abundant reason for zeal in his service. But in how many thousands of cases are the volitions of men in accordance with their dispositions, while *both* are condemned by an enlightened conscience? Such is the case with sinners in general, and even with the drunkard, the gambler, and the robber. So also it was with the proud Pharisees, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. They were of a censorious disposition, and with this their volitions were accordant. Hence they chose to denounce the meek and humble Messiah, as a sinner, a sabbath-breaker, and a blasphemer.

2. "In keeping the commandments of God there is great reward;" and as self-denial is implied in obedience, there is a reward of happiness in acts of self-denial. It is true that both pleasure and pain are implied in self-denial. It is in some respects painful to deny the vicious appetite and disposition; but in other respects there is a pleasure, a real sweetness resulting from such acts of obedience to God and to conscience. One victory thus obtained over self affords ground for greater joy, than taking a city by storm, or the greatest conquests over external foes.

The belief, that a person cannot choose contrary to his disposition, and that the sinner must have a new disposition, formed by supernatural operations of the Spirit, before he can obey any divine command, seems to be completely adapted to paralyze the mind of the sinner, to make him think he has an ample excuse in respect to any reforming volition. The prodigal, when awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, did not say I cannot choose the way of reformation, till God shall give me a new disposition from which the volition may flow; but this was his language; "I will arise, and go to my Father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants." He arose and went according to this resolution; and he was graciously received, forgiven, and restored to favor. Let other transgressors, like the prodigal, come to themselves, resolve to forsake their ways of sin, and to return to God, and, like him, they will find this the way of life and peace.

In calling sinners to reformation, the inspired teachers adopted different forms of speech. Thus says Isaiah, "Cease to do evil; learn to do well." Ezekiel says, "Make you a new

heart, and a new spirit." "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" Peter says, "Repent and be converted." James says, "Humble yourselves." The Messiah not only called on men to repent, but to deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow him. A change of character and conduct is implied in each of these forms. To cease to do evil and learn to do well, is equivalent to making a new heart.

It is worthy of notice, that the inspired teachers did not accompany their calls to reformation with any remarks implying that they were aware, that it was impossible for the sinner to obey the call, until God should exercise his sovereignty in granting special influences of his Spirit, and give them a new disposition. Is it not then wonderful, that teachers in modern times should have adopted a practice, for which they have no example in the Scriptures, and which tends directly to lead the sinner to suppose, that he has a good excuse for delay, till he shall receive the necessary influences?

Another circumstance also demands attention. At the present day, preachers are in the habit of ascribing awakenings and reformations to supernatural influences of the Spirit, which are granted in a sovereign manner to one person, or one people, and denied to others; yet I can find no example for this in the Bible. The reformation at Nineveh is mentioned in the Old Testament; it is also mentioned by the Messiah, as recorded by Matthew. But in no instance is it ascribed to special influences of the Spirit. The preaching of Jonah is the cause to which Christ ascribed the event. He thus said to his hearers, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here." To perceive any force in this language, we must suppose that the Jews, to whom Jesus preached, had greater advantages than the Ninevites. But if special influences of the Spirit are in all cases necessary to repentance, and if these were granted to the Ninevites and denied to the Jews, the advantages of the Ninevites were greater than those of the Jews, notwithstanding the latter had a preacher greater than Jonas.

A similar objection to ascribing reformations to special influences may be found in the following language of Christ; "Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and

ashes. From this passage, the continuance of the people of Tyre and Sidon in a state of impenitency is surely ascribed to other causes than the want of special influences, of the Spirit. For it does not appear that these were granted to Tyre and Sidon, any more than to Chorazin and Bethsaida; yet we are assured by Christ, that had his mighty works been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago; and not, like the Jews of whom he spake, have resisted such evidence and abused such means of light and reformation.

It may also be observed that, after the resurrection of our Lord, there were great awakenings at Jerusalem under the preaching of the apostles; but in no instance were these ascribed to special influences of the Spirit on the hearts or minds of the converts. Miracles were indeed wrought at that period, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to convince the spectators that he was indeed the Messiah, and that he, who had been crucified by the influence of the Jews, had been raised from the dead by the power of God. But these miracles were wrought on the bodies of men, and not in the hearts of the converts. They were well adapted to awaken attention, and to lead the people to repent of their wickedness in crucifying the Lord of glory, and such was their effect on the minds of thousands, when accompanied with the truths declared by the apostles.

The language of Christ respecting his miracles, or the mighty works which had been done in Chorazin and Bethsaida, clearly implies, that such miracles were highly adapted to awaken and reform an unprejudiced people, and to dispose them to listen to divine instructions; and when similar miracles were wrought in his name by the apostles, they appear to have had their proper effect on the minds of many. Uncommon occurrences, though not miraculous, often have a similar effect, to rouse attention, excite concern on account of guilt and danger, and open the minds of men to a candid hearing and reception of divine truths. Due attention, reflection, and inquiry must naturally excite reforming volitions.

Let it, however, be understood, that I do not deny the agency of the Divine Spirit in calling sinners to repentance. It is only in regard to the doctrine of *special* influences that I express my dissent. This I have done because, after much inquiry, I could not find that doctrine stated in the Scriptures; nor in any instance of reformation recorded in the Scriptures, could I find such occurrences ascribed to special influences, in

any other sense, than as external miracles were sometimes employed as means of awakening attention, and affording conviction of the truth of important facts. Being convinced of what I believe to have been my former error on this point, I now feel no difficulty in exhorting sinners to immediate reformation in the very forms of speech adopted by the inspired teachers, without the least intimation, that special influences of the Spirit are essential to enable them to do what God requires. In this view of the matter, the Gospel appears consistent with itself, a gospel indeed, and equally simple is the path of duty both to the preacher and the hearer. Just as a kind parent calls on his disobedient and wandering children, to abandon their ways of vice and learn to do well, to do what they know is right, so God calls on his disobedient children. If a good parent has a prodigal son, in calling him to reformation, he does not teach him that he cannot cease his tippling and gambling, unless God shall first take away his disposition for such vices, and give a new disposition by supernatural influences of his Spirit; so God and his inspired teachers were equally silent in regard to any such intimations. Dependence on God may be as clearly taught and as deeply felt, without the doctrine of supernatural influences as with it. The doctrine, that in God we live, move, and have our being, and that all our sufficiency is from him, is a doctrine which is applicable to all our race, and as applicable in things secular as in things spiritual; and when properly understood it is adapted at once to humble and encourage; for if it implies that, while our sufficiency is of God, he grants a sufficiency commensurate with duty, not that he withholds sufficiency for the duties he requires, nor that he arbitrarily requires the same duty of all, while he grants sufficiency to but a part of his children. To whomsoever much is given, of him is much required, and of each is required according to the ability which is granted by God.

Suppose that, in the days of Pharaoh, straw was an essential ingredient for making the brick which he demanded of the men of Israel, that all the straw was in the hands of the king, that he required of each of the laborers a certain number of brick daily, while to some of them he granted the necessary straw, and to others this was denied: What would have been thought of the equity of the monarch?

Or suppose that all the men of Israel had by disobedience forfeited the king's favor, and exposed themselves to the penal-

ty of death ; that under the pretext of great clemency to these offenders he made them an offer of pardon, on condition that they should severally make for him a certain number of brick every day for six months, that they had all means and ability to comply, excepting the necessary straw, which was all wholly in the king's hands, and that to some he gave a full supply, while from others he wholly withheld the essential aid, without any other reason than that such was his sovereign pleasure : Who could have seen either mercy or equity in such a proceeding ? Could those from whom the essential aid was denied be reasonably punished for non-compliance with the proposed offer ? Would not the offer to them on such impossible conditions be rather an insult than act of mercy ?

Shall we then dare to ascribe to God such a policy, and still call the statement of it "a doctrine of grace ?" And is it not amazing, that such a doctrine should have been deemed in the highest degree honorable to God ?

To my views of the sinner's capacity to obey, some may be disposed to make such objections as the following.

1. That they tend to excite in the sinner a feeling of independence and sufficiency.

But how can this be, while they are taught, that all their sufficiency is of God, and daily granted according to his requirements ? And why is there not equal ground for this feeling on the hypothesis, that special influences are actually given ?

2. It may be objected, that on my hypothesis, those who obey the Gospel make themselves to differ from the disobedient ; but on the other hypothesis, it is God who makes the obedient to differ from others.

I would here ask, "In what does the difference here referred to consist ? Does it not consist in obedience on the one hand, and disobedience on the other ? Most certainly it does. I have then further to ask, Does the objection mean, that God *repents* and *obeys* for the reforming sinner ? If not, there surely is a sense, an important sense, in which the two classes of men make themselves to differ from each other. On the ground of this distinction their future rewards will be different ; and on this ground we read ; "Blessed are they that *do* his commandments." "But indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish on every soul that *doeth* evil." "For every man shall be rewarded according to his works."

Still it is very true, that in the distribution of talents and priv-

ileges in the present world, God often makes one to differ from another ; but he applies a principle of equality, which covers the whole ground, as his requirements are in exact proportion to what each individual receives. No man has anything but what he receives, and no one is responsible for more than he receives. He who has ten talents, is accountable for ten ; and he who has but one is accountable for one, and no more.

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#### INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

No one, who is accustomed to regard with much attention the history and tendencies of religious opinion, can fail of being convinced, that the question indicated above is soon to become the most absorbing question of Christian theology. The minds of men are in that position in reference to this subject, which cannot long be maintained. They must move one way or the other. They must attain to some sort of consistency, either by believing less, or by believing more. The authority of the Scriptures, and especially those of the Old Testament, must either become higher and stronger, or be reduced almost to nothing. It is vain to imagine that, with the present secret or open skepticism, or at least vague and unsettled notions, with which they are regarded, even by many who are defenders of a special revelation, they can be read and taught in our churches, schools, and families, as books *sui generis*, so as to command much of real reverence for themselves.

For ourselves, we are at no loss in deciding as to which direction opinions will ultimately tend. We are satisfied that the Scriptures are to open out their revelations with new light and beauty upon the human mind. Meanwhile, we think it time to raise the question, whether liberal Christians, in avoiding the blind dogmatism of the defenders of Calvinistic theories, the pharisaical tenacity with which they cling to the mere letter, unmindful of the spirit that giveth life, the absurd and fantastic criticism, by which the letter is made to bend and accommodate itself to newly discovered facts in natural or

moral science, have not been betrayed into the opposite error, and made concessions to an unbelieving age, which truth cannot warrant nor defend. So at least we think, and we bespeak the attention of candid and thoughtful men to the discussion of this subject ; albeit we may take positions which at first they may not be disposed to allow.

We defend the doctrine of *the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures*, and we think we can show to the reader, if he will follow us, not only that this theory is rational in itself, but that it is the only theory which, for any practical purpose, can preserve the authority of the Scriptures from total subversion. And here, did we aim at completeness in the argument, it would be necessary to define at length what we mean by plenary inspiration, and what by the Scriptures. We understand plenary inspiration to mean, that the whole Scriptures, to which these words apply, are properly the word of God, and not of man ; that they have no admixture of human error ; that they are as fully and truly the expression of the Divine Mind, as a human composition is the expression of the human mind that produced it.

To the question, what are "the Scriptures" of which we understand such inspiration to be predicated, a full answer cannot be given, without going into the whole subject of the canon to an extent which is here impossible. We suppose that every enlightened mind, in the perusal of the Bible, observes a distinction, more or less clearly apprehended, in the character of different portions. Neither the Jew nor the Christian regards with the same feelings all the books of the Old Testament. Is there any rule to make the distinction clear and palpable ? Most certainly there is — one deducible from the language of the Saviour. When he refers in general to such of the Old Testament Scriptures, as he regards of divine authority, he quotes them as "the law," referring not specifically to the books of Moses, but the whole Divine record. (See John x. 34.) When he refers to those records, naming specific portions, he calls them "the law and the prophets," or "the law, the prophets, and the psalms." (Luke xxiv. 44.) These include the Mosaic books, the prophetical, and the psalms of David. These alone are quoted as authority in the New Testament, and these only should we defend as properly "the word of God," so far as relates to the elder Scriptures.

We understand a like distinction to hold, in respect to the New Testament, between the Gospels and the Epistles. We suppose every Christian makes it more or less clearly in his own mind ; and we are quite sure it was made by the primitive Church, which regarded the Gospels as of pre-eminent authority. A distinction is palpable on a mere casual perusal of the books themselves. The Gospels embody the life and doctrines of the Saviour, and are addressed to the Christian Church, in all ages. The Epistles are addressed to particular Churches, to meet special cases and exigencies which arose and were soon forgotten. They are of high authority, from the known character and opportunities of the writers. We regard those writers with that reverence and deference that we should all the sayings and doings of those, who had been the Lord's personal followers, or received supernatural light. But their illumination was general. It was not for the special end of writing letters to those particular Churches. But the obvious design of the Gospels is different. Their style is different ; the persons of the writers are lost sight of altogether. There is not, from beginning to end, the manifestation of individual feeling or opinion, of wonder, astonishment, or any human passion, such as breaks forth in the writings of Paul. Things of the most awful and overwhelming import are set forth with almost entire unconsciousness on the part of the writers. They are written for the whole Church, and for all times ; not for persons or particular bodies of men. For whoever might have been the "excellent Theophilus," to whom Luke inscribes his narrative, he appears no where in the body of his writing, which plainly was not designed for private use. Moreover, the Gospels were constantly appealed to by the earliest Christian writers, as of full and pre-eminent authority. But we cannot find among the numerous quotations of Lardner, from the writers of the first two centuries, that the terms "sacred scriptures" are more than once applied to the Epistles, and rarely if ever can we find that they are named as properly "the word of God."

We can have no doubt as to the character of the Apocalypse, if we allow its own claims to inspiration. It purports to be a prophetical book, written under Divine illumination, and as such is widely distinguishable from all human compositions ; or else it is a fancy-sketch, and no more sacred than the dreams of any uninspired man.

We have made this discrimination merely for the purpose of definition. We beg the reader to take note, that we are not *arguing* the question of the canon. We are about to assert an inspiration for "the Scriptures," which we should not claim for the Epistles of the New Testament, nor for any portion of the Old, but "the law, the prophets, and the psalms;" and it was incumbent upon us, for the sake of perspicuity, to define the terms. The argument has reference to the Scriptures as thus distinguished.

I. Look first at the historical argument, or the argument from authority. And here let us make clear and prominent the testimony of the Saviour himself. All the ingenuity of learning and criticism fail to show that Christ, fairly interpreted, does not quote the elder Scriptures as Divine authority — as, in the full sense of the phrase, the word of God. (Mark vii. 11, 13.) "Ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, corban — that is to say, a gift, whatever of mine shall profit thee, he shall not thenceforth do aught for his father or mother, making THE WORD OF GOD of none effect, through your tradition." The Mosaic record is here called the word of God. But if any one should be disposed to restrict the phrase to this particular command which Moses delivered, then let him examine the following passage. (John x. 34.) When the Jews were about to stone Jesus, because he claimed oneness with his Father, he argued in reply — "Is it not written in *your law*, I said ye are gods? If he called them gods, to whom *the word of God* came, and *the Scripture cannot be broken*." The text here quoted as from the law is from the Psalms, showing that this term sometimes covered the whole inspired record. Observe here, first, that "the word of God" is a phrase applied summarily to the Divine oracles given to the Jews, and secondly, they are called the Scripture that cannot be broken. The stereotyped criticism that Christ uses with the Jews, the *ad hominem* argument, cannot at least be applied here. His reasoning evidently is — "If he called them gods to whom the word of God came — and surely he did call them so, for thus read the Scriptures, and they cannot be broken, their authority cannot be impeached or set aside." — Nothing less than their infallible authority warrants such language as this. (Mat. v. 17, 19.) "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Words could not be more explicit or emphatic in asserting the Divine authority of these writings, from the least things to the greatest. The term law again, in the latter clause of this passage, evidently includes the whole inspired record — whether historical or prophetical.

In those passages where Christ is said to expound the law and the prophets — or the law, the prophets, and the psalms — those books are clearly quoted as of Divine authorship. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things might be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and the psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke xxiv. 27, 44, 45.) We presume no one will assert, that the Scriptures were quoted on this occasion by "way of accommodation." The writings, quoted in all the passages now referred to, are appealed to as writings of a peculiar nature, and standing forth in sacred distinction among all the literature of the Jews.

Matt. xxii. 41, 43 : "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, the son of David. He said unto them, how then doth David by the Spirit call him Lord?" The parallel text in Mark renders the passage entirely unequivocal. "David himself said by the Holy Ghost." The testimony is direct and full to the inspiration of David, or rather to the whole book of Psalms, for under the term "David" the Jews included that whole collection of sacred poetry.

What then do we find? Not only that portions of books are quoted as the utterance of Divine inspiration, but that these writings collectively are named and quoted as of Divine authorship. They are the Scriptures — the word of God — the Law — the Scriptures that cannot be broken — Scriptures which were uttered by the Spirit or by the Holy Ghost. The plea, that this is popular language, is by no means available. Christ asserts in his own language, and from his own lofty position, the absolute sacredness of the records, to which he

makes appeal, and which he so expounds to his disciples as to make their hearts burn within them. No distinction is made in this respect between different portions of the sacred writings. They are quoted on the other hand, so as to preclude any such distinction — a distinction which, if admitted one moment, would introduce uncertainty and confusion, and render the word of God indeed of none effect.

Turn next to the testimony of the Apostles ; and let the object for which we quote them be fully understood. We are not travelling the round of that vicious circle, in which the authorities of the Old and of the New Testaments are made mutually to establish each other. We are arguing, we suppose, with Christians, and not with infidels ; and whatever be our theories of inspiration, the Apostles, from their position and character, will be regarded by those to whom this argument is addressed, as commanding authority upon this subject ; though we confess we should not employ this argument with an unbeliever.

Paul's language is strong and emphatic, and goes to the full inspiration of the record. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," or in the strong idiomatic expression of the original, "all Scripture is God-breathed." We see not what Le Clerc gains by changing the position of the verb. He renders, "All Scripture, *which* is given by inspiration of God, is profitable," &c. This even would imply that *some* Scripture was thus given, and was broadly distinguished from all other Scriptures. But the verse thus rendered asserts a mere truism, and the preceding text shows that the rendering is wrong. Paul says to Timothy, "And thou from a child hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. All Scripture (i. e. all which he had just referred to, and called holy) is God-breathed :" the result of the Divine soul, passing through the mind of the writer into his writing, and therefore throughout the utterance of the Divine mind. Any other meaning, than this obvious one, would make the Apostle use language to very little purpose. (2 Tim. iii. 16.)

The testimony of the author of the second epistle of Peter, is quite as full and emphatic as that of Paul. Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The word rendered moved, (*περιπετεῖσθαι*), means carried away.

The idea plainly is their own will was lost or taken from them. The Spirit of God possessed their faculties and employed them for its own purposes, so that no human imperfection infected the current of the Divine Mind that flowed through them. Nothing less than plenary inspiration satisfies such language. We are aware that the authorship of this epistle is very doubtful, but whether written by Peter or not, it reflects the opinions of the early disciples.

Turn next to the testimony of the primitive Church. And here we might fill pages of quotations from the early fathers, but it will serve our purpose to exhibit a specimen merely, referring to Lardner for numerous other passages to the same purpose.

Ignatius says, (A. D. 107,) "Fleeing to the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus, and to the Apostles as the presbytery of the Church." Grabe and Mill understand by "the gospel" the book or volume of the gospels which was generally thus designated by the early fathers; and by "the Apostles" the book or volume of their Epistles. Le Clerc and Lardner both assent to the truth of this, and the former comments upon the passage, thus; "What Ignatius intends, is this—that in order to understand the will of God, he fled to the Gospels, which he believed no less than if Christ himself in the flesh, that is in the condition he was in on the earth, present and still living among men, delivered with his own mouth those discourses which are contained in the Gospels: as also he fled to the writings of the Apostles, whom he esteemed as the presbytery of the whole Christian Church, under Christ, the universal Bishop, which (presbytery) taught all Christian societies what they ought to believe." Here the high and plenary authority of the Gospels, and the distinction between them and the Epistles, are made clear and striking.\*

Dyonisius of Corinth, (A. D. 172,) has this remarkable passage; "Nor can there be fewer Gospels than these. For as there are four regions of the world in which we live, and four catholic spirits, and the Church is spread over all the earth, and the Gospel is the pillar and foundation of the Church and the spirit of life, in like manner was it fit it should have four pillars, breathing on all sides incorruption, and refreshing mankind. Whence it is manifest that the

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\* Lardner, vol. i., p. 322, quarto edition.

Word, the former of all things, who sits upon the cherubim, having appeared to men, has given us a Gospel of a four-fold character, but joined in one spirit.”\*

Theophilus, (A. D. 181.) “These things the Holy Scriptures teach us, and all who were moved by the Holy Spirit, among whom John says; ‘In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God.’ Again; “Concerning the righteousness which the law teaches, the like things are to be found in the prophets and the Gospels, because that all being inspired spoke by one and the same Spirit of God.”†

Origen, (A. D. 230,) “That our religion teaches us to seek after wisdom, shall be shown both out of the ancient Jewish Scriptures, which we also use, and out of those written since Jesus, which are believed in the churches to be divine.”

We may add in general, that we find the New Testament writings all along, from their first reception in the churches, spoken of as the “Divine Scriptures,” the “sacred fountain,” “the evangelical voice,” “the word of God.” And Origen says, as quoted by Eusebius, “The four Gospels alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven.”‡

Such is the whole current of opinion in the primitive Church. The New Testament, and especially the Gospels, along with the Old Testament, were received fully and unreservedly as the word of God. Not a dissenting voice against the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures comes up from the whole company of Christian believers. We have heard Origen, and writers of the Alexandrian school, quoted to establish a contrary position; but the citations have sole reference to the literal or historical sense, which these writers are well known to have regarded as the shadow of one which was higher and spiritual. They did not believe the less in its plenary inspiration, because they admitted the letter in some instances to have no historical basis. The testimony begins with the writers of the Old Testament, who assert their own inspiration by a “thus saith the Lord”—“the word of the Lord came unto me saying.” The Saviour’s testimony is clear and positive. His Apostles, so far as they

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\* Lardner, vol. i., pp. 365, 366. † Ib. pp. 384, 389. ‡ Ib. chap. xxxviii.

testify at all, are unequivocal to the same doctrine. The same current of opinion sweeps through the whole Church, with singular uniformity, down to the days of the Reformation.

II. Let us now see what are the results, logical and practical, when this doctrine is departed from. We take this as a second ground of argument — a kind of moral *reductio ad absurdum*. We apprehend that this view of the revelations of God must be taken, or else we must take one from which are subverted all the high purposes of a revelation. As soon as we leave the high and firm ground which hath now been described — this rock of the ages — we find ourselves afloat in a sea of uncertainty, skepticism, and unbelief. We think we may show that henceforth there is no land which the eye can discover, except the land that reposes dimly in the shadow of death.

Let us endeavor to trace the progress of opinion from the first partial eclipse of Divine truth to the point of total darkness. At the period of the Reformation, Luther placed the first limit upon the primitive doctrine, and contended that the matter only of the Bible was of Divine origin — the composition was human. The ideas are the result of inspiration, the writers clothed them in language entirely their own. This is the origin of the distinction between general and verbal inspiration, about which we hear so much at the present day.

Well do Ernesti and other writers say, in opposition to this, that it is difficult to abstract an inspiration of ideas from an inspiration of language. We think it not only difficult, but impossible. We think those, who contend for this distinction, would find themselves hard pressed to tell precisely what they mean. How, we ask, could ideas flow from one mind into another, and from the mind of God into the mind of man, except through the forms of language? The supposition, that thought can be bodied forth from mind to mind, except through those forms and images that clothe and represent it, is altogether irrational and absurd. There cannot be such a thing as inspiration of thought without an inspiration of language, until a thing can be signified without signs. The Divine wisdom could not come down into human affairs, without taking the forms of speech, any more than the Divine energies could flow out into the natural world, without taking the forms of matter. Language has been beautifully defined

as thought crystalized. Thought cannot be communicated before it is crystalized — nay, it cannot exist as thought, except in clear and definite forms. Moreover, the forms of speech always correspond to the nature of the thought. Except when men attempt to ape something foreign to their nature, their language is always the living garment of the soul. The mind, according to its nature and condition, will take its appropriate forms of manifestation. Changes of style always pre-suppose a corresponding change in modes and habits of thinking, and hence the style of writing in any age reflects truly the mind of the age itself. The mind of God, therefore, cannot be revealed any farther than it clothes itself in a language of its own, and takes its own forms of manifestation. There must be an inspiration of language, as well as of ideas, *at least to the mind of the writer*, else he never could receive the ideas themselves. Thus the mind of God was revealed to Peter by an assemblage of symbols of its own selection. The only question that can be raised is, whether the writer, having thus received the Divine Mind in its own Divine language, would be left finite, ignorant, and erring, to blunder forth the revelation, infected with all the imperfections of his own understanding. It would be impossible, in the nature of things, for a revelation of infinite truth to be made thus to the human race. Outward facts might thus be communicated, but a system of eternal and living truth never could be. Coming thus from the individual, it would not be a revelation from God : it would be his own imperfect and erring notions of what that revelation was, told in his own imperfect and fallible way. It would be *his* revelation, not that of the infinite Reason. We might get so much of truth as he happened to receive, if we knew which it was, and there we must rest forever. We never could rise above his level. Christianity thus communicated would not be a system for the ever progressive soul of man. It cannot be a revelation to us, answering to our erring and ignorant minds the purposes of a revelation, unless its truths flow out and become embodied in the ultimate forms of speech ; unless fixed in those forms, it reflect the pure truths of the omniscient Mind. As well might we conceive that God would have created his universe, by exhibiting to man a plan of its magnificent parts, and its infinite variety of scenery, and then leaving the frail

and weak mortal to carry out and execute his great idea. The result would have been, not this glorious universe, but a manufactory or a corn-mill ! So in revealing a system of everlasting truth, we might as reasonably imagine that he would give the ideas to some finite and erring mind, and leave that mind to give them a living manifestation. We should have had, not a Bible, which we may learn forever, but some book which would compare with that volume, as the machine-shop compares with the living system of nature, fresh from the hand of nature's God.

The successors of Luther did not stop here. It next became a question, whether all *the matter* of the Bible was of Divine inspiration. "The progress of natural philosophy made it impossible, that anything but blind superstition should assert this character for all physical facts,"\* and so the natural philosophy of the Bible was excluded from the sphere of inspiration.

Under this head comes a class of apologies for the Bible, such as these ; — that it was not designed to teach astronomy or philosophy, or to decide the merits of the Copernican system. The idea is, that the writers on these subjects, being left to their own ignorance, have introduced their crude notions and errors, and mixed them up with the truths of revelation. Here is assumed, what we confidently deny to be true, that there is no intimate and necessary connexion between nature and religion. What is nature ? It is the symbol of God's truth ; its language as solemn and unerring as that of the Bible. It is the bright page that unfolds God's goodness, wisdom, and glory. "The invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." In the degree that nature is dark, or its laws falsely apprehended, religion becomes technical, arbitrary, and absurd. For this very reason, man needed a new revelation, to pour a new light upon nature, and teach him anew the meaning and the beauty of outward things. Nature, when rightly understood, reveals truly the attributes of God ; when darkened or misapprehended, those attributes are shad-

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\* See the "History of the Rise and Early Progress of Christianity," by Rev. S. Hinds, Oxford : Appendix, vol. ii.

owed, or falsely seen. Do not these critics, then, see the utter absurdity of supposing, that God would give to man a revelation, infected with blunders and falsehoods pertaining to one essential department of religion ; a revelation in which the sublimest theme of human contemplation — that of the creation of this glorious universe — was turned into darkness, fable, and nonsense ? The only reasonable inference would be, either that this is not a revelation, which we had first taken to be one, or that this part of it had been wrongly interpreted.

But, says the writer already referred to, “one portion of the matter of the Bible — its natural philosophy — having been once excluded, from the sphere of inspiration, it has been justly contended, that similar difficulties are obviated by excluding *profane history*, and that there is no more ground for maintaining the inspiration of the writers in the one case than the other.”

Surely he argues rightly. But here we would ask, what is the precise distinction between sacred and profane history ? There is an important sense in which all history is sacred, since all human events are under the control of Providence, and are guided by Him to their final consummation. It would require more knowledge than any critic hath yet possessed, to enable him to sit down with his Bible, and running over its historical parts, say, this event stands connected with the plan of Providence as here revealed ; that event has no such connexion. Hence this work of limitation cannot stop here ; so that the writer very consistently goes on, “It may fairly be questioned whether even the *sacred history* is inspired. For although wherein a point of faith or practice is involved in the historical record, inspiration must be supposed, (else the application of the record, as an infallible rule, must be abandoned,) yet where this is not the case, there seems to be no necessity for supposing inspiration ; and by not supposing it, several difficulties in the attempt to harmonize the sacred historians are removed.”

Difficulties removed ! We should be glad to see this canon of criticism applied. In the first place, the Pentateuch goes in one mass, except some points of “faith and practice,” which we must sift out for ourselves ; but which, on examination, we shall generally find woven into a texture, which is seamless throughout. Next go the historical parts of the psalms and the prophets, and these constitute a very

large portion of those books. Then follow the general framework and substance of the Gospels, for these, in the main, are historical. Again, there are portions, which are partly historical and partly dialectical, such as the introduction to John's Gospel, and we must be ever in doubt as to which class they belong. We imagine the expression of anxiety, if not despair, that must sit upon the countenance of the common reader of the Bible, with this rule of criticism before him, as he attempts to pick out the specks of gold from the heaps of sand, along with which it hath drifted down from the heights above. Might it not be suggested to these critics, that what is excluded under the name of history, may contain, *as history*, the most important lessons, and even the highest doctrines of faith? The resurrection of Christ is an event purely historical — that fundamental fact of the Christian religion. And it may be that other events, included in the sacred narratives, have a bearing upon human interests, whose importance the critic may not readily discover.

But again; “*The reasoning* of the inspired writers may be considered safely their own. The assertions, not the proofs, are the proper objects of unqualified assent.” That is to say, of course, assertions which do not involve any points of philosophy or history. Where these are positively or absolutely made, we must receive them as of Divine authority; the reasoning about them is merely human and fallible. These, then, must be instances in which the writers announce the truth of God from direct revelation; and then proceed to establish God’s word by arguments of their own. We marvel why such arguments, placed side by side with direct annunciations from heaven, should not have appeared to those, who offered them, quite as superfluous as they do to their critics themselves, and how they could ever have thought it necessary to put them forward, and endorse the declarations of the Almighty!

The next limitation, which is made by those who apply these principles of criticism, has reference, not to philosophy and history, but to *doctrine* itself. They exclude certain doctrines, which the writers introduced on their own fallible authority, and which come not within the sphere of inspiration. Among these are sometimes reckoned opinions respecting demons, the destruction of the world, or the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus Christ. Here, and in

such other instances as we may select ourselves, the writers give us their own opinions and impressions.\*

We would here ask, why did man need a revelation at all? Was it not for the very reason that he had become so darkened and corrupted, that he could not discover truth by his own intuitions — that his feeble understanding could not of itself separate the truth from the error? Was it not even as Paul hath said — that, vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools? Is it very different now? Do not the vain imaginations, and the ten thousand forms of debasing error, which we are called daily to witness, attest that man, left to his own degraded reason, cannot sit as judge between truth and error? For this cause, he needed a revelation of pure truth, appealing at first, by miracle, to his very senses — the only evidence which *then* he could understand — that afterward, it might purge his heart and clarify his reason and transform his mind into its own resplendent image. He needed, not a system of religion which he might bring down to his own level, but which should lift him up into its own light and glory. But the theory of inspiration, against which we argue, supposes a revelation to come to man, containing true doctrine and false mingled together, and he is first to separate the dross from the gold. He must first sit in judgment upon its truths, when, for the very reason that his judgment was dark and erring, he needed the revelation. We submit whether man, thus darkened and fallible, is competent to decide upon the essentials of the gospel system, and separate between the light and the darkness — to say which of the doctrines of the Bible pertain to the special objects of a revelation, and which do not. Which of the doctrines of the New Testament did Christ come specially to reveal? The future life? And is the doctrine respecting demoniacs no way connected with the laws of the spiritual world, and the spiritual nature of man? Are the doctrines of the Scriptures respecting angels, also, to be put down, as errors of the times, and as incorporated with the teachings of Jesus by his mistaken followers? Are doctrines of Christ's pre-existence, divinity, or humanity, connected with the essentials of

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\* See Lardner's Discourses on Demoniacs, vol. i, of his Credibility — "Jesus and his Biographers," p. 105.

the Christian scheme, or entirely foreign to it, and without the limits of inspiration? If we think so, then we may set aside the introduction to John's gospel as his own private reasoning or speculation, thinking that the old apostle platonized or gnosticized, and fell into the errors of his times. What doctrine is there of the New Testament—except one or two, which must be stated in the most vague and general way—that will not be made uncertain and altogether powerless, by such a canon of criticism as this? The notion of a resurrection may have been borrowed of the Pharisees, and introduced into Christianity by Judaizing converts. Do we not know, that in our fallible and imperfect condition, the highest truth may seem to us folly, and our own errors seem like wisdom? How, then, are we competent to say that those portions of the New Testament, which seem to us to contain the errors of former times, may not contain revelations, which our shallow philosophy hath not yet been able to compass, or understand? What has the light of science explained in reference to them? Nothing at all. What were called demoniacal possessions, science calls epilepsy or insanity, remaining as profoundly ignorant of the whole matter as before. Science hath but imposed upon herself with a name. With such a theory of the Scriptures, we should feel very nearly in the condition where natural religion would leave us—the mind, loosed from its moorings, and floating at random, upon every doubtful wave.

The next stage, in this downward progress of opinion, is—that the Scriptures are not inspired at all. The Bible is not an inspired book, but the history of men who lived sometime ago, that were inspired. "They belong to the department of history, biography, memoirs," and are to be regarded like all other productions of the same class. They are "the record of a revelation," and nothing more. This theory makes no distinction between the Bible and other histories, except in regard to the subjects and events it treats of. As to the style of the narrative, it often falls much below that of ordinary histories. As to the qualifications of the writers, they were honest, but rude and ignorant men, and infected with the superstitions of the times.

The question must here come up, and be pressed home upon the advocates of such a theory of the Bible, what propriety is there in using those writings, and quoting them as *sui*

*generis*, taking texts from them, and reading them in our churches? Is it because some of these writers were personally acquainted with Christ, and had better opportunities for reporting to us his words and actions? We will admit this; but the admission only affects two books of the New Testament, Matthew and John, for these only contain reports of eye-witnesses of what Christ did and taught. Then apply this principle to the Old Testament; and only four books of Moses will stand in solitary grandeur, amidst a mass of human traditions, the moral precepts of a dark age, and the poetic effusions of rude and excited minds. The book of Genesis should command no more respect than Chaldaean or Egyptian chronologies; the prophets and the Psalms quoted by the Saviour, as "Scripture that cannot be broken," are nothing more than the warnings of preachers, or the outpourings of Hebrew bards. The New Testament, with the exception already made, sinks to a level with the general Christian literature of that early age; and the Catholic is right in breaking down the usual distinctions between the writings of the New Testament and those of the fathers. Why prefer Genesis to Berossus or Sanconiathon; or Hebrew literature to the Platonic Dialogues, or the Tusculan Questions? Why not read Chrysostom, or Fenelon, or George Herbert, as of equal authority in all matters of doctrine and ethics, with the writers of the New Testament? The two latter, especially, lived in more enlightened times, and were less infected with local superstitions; why not read them in the churches, in preference to Luke or Matthew, for all purposes, except those of mere testimony; and in preference to David and Jeremiah, for all purposes whatever? We see no escape possible from the conclusions which these questions indicate. We could go into the pulpit with as solemn a countenance, with any judicious and pious writer, or with any human compilation of the historical facts of the Bible, and read them to a reverent congregation, and quote them as authority.

And is it indeed credible, that the word was made flesh, and dwelt among men, that he might enlighten every man that cometh into the world, and yet that he shines upon the world through a medium so imperfect, that it dims all his original brightness? To what purpose did all the fullness of the Godhead dwell in Jesus Christ, if it cannot be manifested in its fullness to all nations and ages? Is there not the same

reason that he should be perfectly imbodyed before us in his Gospels, as that he should appear two thousand years ago with perfect manifestations of his truth ; that the word written should be as full, perfect, and unerring as the Word made flesh ? If not, then Christ lived and taught for Palestine, and his twelve disciples, and only two or three years, not for the whole world and for all coming generations.

But we have not yet found a resting-place. There is a stage yet farther down in this progress of opinion, and the ground beneath us is not yet firm and solid. A lower deep still opens beneath us.

Can any reason be assigned or imagined, why the same distinction between inspiration of ideas and of expression does not hold good, in respect to Christ, as it does of all other inspired men? If there be any philosophical difficulty in one case so is there in the other. Why not reject the notion of verbal inspiration, as respects the spoken words and discourses of the Saviour? We may equally well suppose that, while the thoughts of infinite wisdom were communicated to his mind, he was left to utter them according to the dictates of his finite intelligence, so that his words even if we can be sure that we have them are but the imperfect shadowing forth of eternal truth. Yea more, we may just as well suppose that, while some of his doctrines and opinions were from God, others were those of the creature, and subject to all the fallibility of human reason. So that we must sift the discourses of the Saviour, and lay off the truth from the error, ere we come to that Christian doctrine which has no alloy. The disciple becomes greater than his Master, and the servant is above his Lord. A more enlightened age can sit in judgment upon the teachings of Christ, and convict him of mistakes and errors. Priestley is terribly consistent, and comes unblenching to this conclusion. Speaking of the changes of his opinions from those of a higher to those of a lower degree of strictness, he says, he became at last " a Socinian of the lowest kind, in which Christ is considered as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, and *naturally as fallible and PECCABLE as Moses or any of the prophets.*"\* Mr. Belsham gives a formal digest of the recognized opinions of the class to which he belongs, the English Unitarians, " They maintain, (he says) that Jesus and his apostles were supernaturally instructed, as far as was necessary

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\* Letters to a philosophical Unbeliever, part ii, pp. 33—35.

for the execution of their commission, that is for the revelation and proof of the doctrine of eternal life, and that the favor of God extended to the Gentiles equally with the Jews, and that Jesus and his apostles were occasionally inspired to foretell future events. But they believe that supernatural inspiration was limited to these cases alone, and that when *Jesus* and his apostles deliver opinions upon subjects unconnected with the object of their mission, *such opinions, and their reasonings upon them, are to be received with the same attention and caution with those of other persons in similar circumstances of similar education and with similar habits of thinking.*" Again, "Jesus of Nazareth was a man constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, *the same ignorance, prejudice, and frailties.*"\*

We admire the calm consistency of these writers ; but we beg to be excused from following them into that gulf, whither their principles have urged them. Reasoning logically from their doctrine of partial inspiration, they turn the light of the Gospel into darkness and its beauty to ashes.

Still the descent is inevitable. If the apostles in their narratives have given us the impressions of their own minds, under no unerring Divine guidance ; if we are to exclude the language, the philosophy, the history and some of the doctrines of their narratives from the limit of inspiration, then it is competent for any critic to assume, that whatever appears supernatural or miraculous in the words or works of Christ, is owing to the minds of his biographers. They saw things through the medium of their own prejudices and superstitions; and so all appeared to them tinged and magnified. They looked on with the feelings, the errors, the false philosophy of a dark age, so that natural events would most surely appear to them supernatural. Christ himself may have mistaken his own impressions for the voice of God, and his own visions for revelations. Priestley's criticism upon the text, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before," comes most naturally from his theory of inspiration. Rather than believe that this text proved the pre-existence of the Saviour, he would believe that Christ "*imagined* he had been carried up to heaven in a vision, which, like that of St. Paul, *he had not been able to distinguish from a reality.*"†

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\* Calm Inquiry, pp. 447, 451. † Letters to Dr. Price, pp. 57, 58.

To the same purpose we may cite the criticisms of a truly eloquent critic upon much of that part of the New Testament, which had been supposed to relate supernatural events. For instance, the explanation of the transfiguration ; Peter "dreamt, as was natural for a Jew to dream, that he beheld two of the ancient prophets, Moses and Elias, conversing with Jesus. The thunder, that mysterious phenomenon as it was in those days, sounded like the articulate voice of God. *By the boundless power of imagination*, the outward and sensible phenomenon was shaped and modulated into the expression and symbol of the one overpowering feeling." The same mode of interpretation may be applied to all the miracles of the New Testament and the Old ; and Geddes, Eichorn, Strauss, and the author of the "Discourse of Religion," do but carry out into its ultimate results that theory of the Scriptures, which many have been so willing to allow. This Revelation, as we deemed it, with its lofty pretensions, sinks away to the merest naturalism. There is no such thing as a special revelation. There is no *kind* of inspiration pertaining to the Bible, that does not belong to the Shaster or the Koran, or to Jesus and his disciples, that does not belong to mankind generally. They were useful to the world, as were Confucius, Zoroaster, and Socrates, and we distinguish them as well as we may, through the myth and fable which invest them, and separate their truths from their errors through the alembic of our own understandings. Thus, as it seems to us, if the doctrine of plenary inspiration be once surrendered the light of revealed religion, which at first burned aloft, flinging far around its full and stainless brilliancy, sinks lower and lower through the damps and vapors of the pit beneath, and burns dim and yet more dim, until finally it goes out and leaves us in the dismal darkness of primeval night. This we conceive springs from no casual abuse or misapplication of the principle against which we contend, but clear and strong logic will drive the principle into these results.

III. There is another ground of argument which we would briefly present. We hold that the doctrine of plenary inspiration while it is supported by authority and is free from the disastrous tendencies, logical and practical, which we have detailed, is also in itself most consonant with right reason and the facts of the case ; that it applies with the least of difficulty to the book we call the Bible. True it has its difficulties, but they are difficulties of a different nature altogether. In the

other case, they are fatal and inconsistent with the very idea of a revelation : in this, they are just such as we should expect to find, granting a revelation to be given.

Suppose then a revelation of infinite truth to be made from God to man, man being not only finite, but dark, corrupt and sinful, having fallen from his spirituality, so as to live mainly in the outward and the sensual. What ought we to expect ? First, undoubtedly, such outward proofs and sanctions as man could judge of in his fallen condition ; as could reach him even in his outward state ; corresponding precisely to the miracles by which our revelation is actually attested. Moreover we ought to expect that so much of this revelation will be clear to him at first, as he is fit to use and understand, and that all else will be to him difficult and incomprehensible. But that this first light being received, obeyed, and acted upon, the pages of the volume would be one after another illumined, and that ever unfolding glories would be unveiled to him as he advanced. If the revelation came from the same mind as did nature, God's elder Scripture, we should look for the same traces of his infinity and greatness, that are found in this magnificent universe. And we should no more expect to understand all its parts at once, than we should expect the child when first opening his eyes upon outward nature to fathom all its mysteries and laws. We will suppose a book to be published now for the first time, claiming to be inspired by God, to be in fact a divine composition. We open it and examine its contents. We find it composed after the most perfect of human models. It has the lucid arrangement and finish of style which belong to one of the orations of Demosthenes. We sit down to read and all is clear to us at once. It has all the harmonies and charms of language, and we see perfectly its unity and design. Is this evidence for the inspiration of the book ? We should say at once it would be evidence conclusive against it. What ! the infinite Being revealing his mind after the poor models of human art ? God speaking to men and tricking out his thoughts in the tinsel of human eloquence ! Jehovah inditing a book in such admirable style, that it shall by no means offend the taste of ignorant and guilty mortals ! And then its clear and classic arrangement and its meaning all lying upon the surface, so obvious that we can understand it at one reading. Yes the Infinite mind opening an eternal fountain of truth, and lo ! man at one draught can drink the fountain dry. Every feature of such a composition

would betray its human origin. It has those trappings of art which would never clothe the thoughts of the everlasting mind. Such a book would soon become like our class books ; learned out, and ever after stale and unprofitable.

Suppose a blind man to open his eyes for the first time to survey the works of art and nature. You are anxious to seize upon this opportunity to impress his mind and convince him of the existence of a God present in his works. But alas ! there is so much irregularity and confusion in the works of nature, so many unsightly objects, that you find he will raise objections and fail to see God in his works. So you lead him blindsfold to some splendid cathedral, you uncover his sight and bid him gaze on its graceful proportions. See here the handy work of God ! See him in those Gothic piles, those curious carvings and those lofty arches ! What would he say if he were a reasonable man ? This the work of God ! Why my poor and narrow vision can take in the whole structure at once, and its graceful finishings are devices unworthy an almighty hand. But those fields that lie outside ! hill and dale and rugged mountain and tangled wood and soaring cloud and eternal sky. Methinks there is a building which man has never touched with his chisel, and whose apartments we may explore forever.

Now this is precisely the relation between the Bible and other books. Its grand features cannot be mistaken, and the loftiest and lowliest minds have been awed before it. It is in some particulars and details that the difficulties occur, and here by all reason and analogy we should expect to find them.

We should look for a second characteristic of a Divine Book already alluded to. If it were in truth inspired ; if it embodied the mind of God, its words would be living words from age to age. Its truths would never be lived out and exhausted. It would never become a dead letter. All human compositions in the nature of things must become so. When society comes up to the level of the writer's mind, his book is at an end, and it is left behind in the rubbish of the past. The great works of human masters are admired for a while, and then they become old. So it is with liturgies, with human creeds and professions of faith. They become in the next age, dead, dry, and forsaken, just in proportion to the advancement of men's minds. It would be otherwise with a Divine Book. Human improvements would only make its words more living and bring out new truth and beauty from its pages. Apply this test to the

Bible. With all the difficulty which theologians feel about its inspiration, we are sure that the mass of pious minds, both learned and unlearned, never felt their own spiritual life more completely bound up with that of the Bible than at the present time. Now if it were not in reality an inspired book, it would become dull and lifeless with all advancement in the spiritual life and the spiritual advancement of society, till there was at length no affinity between the dead letter and the living soul. Let the mind of any nation be inspired and spiritualized, and its sacred books will fall away and be neglected, unless those books be filled throughout with a higher spirit than its own. So it was that the old mythology became obsolete. So would the Shaster become, if the mind of Bumah were once touched with a Divine Life. Now this capacity of the Bible to meet all the spiritual wants of all men and ages, with its light and spirit still inexhaustible, is worth more than volumes of argument or books of evidences to prove that the Divinity dwells with fullness within its bosom. The fires that are kindled by human hands will cease to glow, but never can the sun exhaust himself of his rays, never can his urn of living light become empty.

This argument, addressed not to the understanding but to the higher reason, might be carried out into applications which the limits of this dissertation will not allow. Is it not true in the personal history of every spiritual man, that the book of inspiration meets the successive wants of his unfolding nature, as no human record could do? Now if the ideas of this book were divine and not its language, or if it contained errors which might be lopped away, this could never be the case. The same ideas might be clothed in better language by minds less rude than those of the original writers. A compilation might be made excluding what successive ages had discovered to be erroneous, and the advancing and renovated mind might turn to these and be satisfied. Is it so? No; there are instincts and interior perceptions, not in rude and ignorant, but in the most spiritualized and enlightened minds, that will not thus be tampered with; which demand the *ipsissima verba*, the very language of revelation. To the merely natural or sensual man, it is tedious or absurd. But let trouble and temptation lie around him, and let his own nature begin to open up its awful mysteries into his consciousness; let penitence or devotion or religious trust become portions of his inward history, and he finds every state of

his mind, as it changes from glory to glory, painted forth as by the pencil of God upon these once mysterious leaves. One page after another becomes magically illumined, till light pours upon his whole nature, condition, and destiny. When his own spirit is brought into unison with the spirit that breathes through the word, that word becomes changed to him as did Jesus to his disciples. Not only its truths seem bright as the sun, but their raiment also appears white and glistening. This test could be successfully applied to no other book. It is true, that other books written by pious and good men are received with deeper interest, when we become more like these men ; but they never speak thus to our spiritual natures and satisfy all their increasing wants. But any well arranged Bible history might do this, any well written life of the Saviour, such as Ware's or Millman's, might do it, unless there be this inspiration for which we are contending. If there be this distinction between inspiration of ideas and inspiration of language, then any body else might take the ideas and dress them out anew, and make a bible just as holy as the one we have.

IV. There are some objections to the doctrine of inspiration as now presented, which cannot well be passed over. Without taking them up and answering them all in detail, we will notice some of the more common.

1. It is said admitting such a thing as plenary inspiration, what avails it to the church and the world ? The original language was translated, and very few have access to it at all. This theory then requires us to believe that the translators were inspired, as well as the original writers.

This objection is based on the assumption, that what we properly call language, considered as the clothing and embodiment of thought, consists merely of letters and articulate sounds ; whereas it includes the whole matter of imagery, metaphor, illustration, style, and arrangement, indeed every thing that makes language the drapery of ideas. These may be called up by one set of arbitrary signs, as well as another, whether those signs be Greek characters or English. And these, the imagery, illustration, and arrangement are all important as pertains to the language of the Bible. The theory of partial inspiration supposes the writers to have used their own illustrations, reasonings, comparisons, and analogies, as if they were competent thus to shadow forth everlasting truth. The theory of plenary inspiration supposes that the truth flowed forth in its own appropriate forms and images, and

in its own divine order, and that these could not be changed without impairing its wholeness. Now, if the same succession of metaphor, illustration, and imagery, which is contained for example in the prophets, the discourses of Christ, or the Apocalypse, is called up to the mind by the letters of the English alphabet instead of the Greek, we do not see how their plenary inspiration is infringed.

Nevertheless the objection has *some* weight. All these we admit would not be likely to be *perfectly* transferred from one dialect to another. But the original perfect embodiment remaining, endless approximations may be made. What if in the earliest versions the English words and letters do not preserve perfectly the Divine drapery in which sacred truth is shadowed forth? The truth itself in its original and perfect form remains entire, and the world may approach it as fast and as far as they are qualified to receive it. The reader of the Bible receives at first but a small portion of its truths. They unfold before him forever. So of the translators, and there is no more practical necessity for their inspiration than for that of the readers. Nay, there is much less, for the translator may transfer from one language to another what he does not understand. We can attach very little of practical force to this objection.

2. Again it is objected, that the doctrine of plenary inspiration, to be available, must suppose the miraculous preservation of the record; whereas the Bible has been subject to the same accidents with other books, and we cannot suppose that we have an exact transcript of the inspired penmen themselves.

We cannot think that this objection has much weight; especially against those books of which plenary inspiration may be more reasonably claimed. The various readings almost uniformly pertain to mere matters of grammar, and scarcely ever to history, to reasoning, to doctrine, or fact; and whenever they do, the right reading is generally clearly determined. It is not a choice between one comparison and another, between one illustration and another, scarcely ever between one arrangement and another. And we cannot doubt that the increasing light of criticism will be sufficient for the exigency, whenever, in the progress of the race, its welfare shall be found to hang upon the difference between *zai* and *de*, or *ōs* and *ō*.

3. Again it is objected, that each of the writers of the Old and New Testament preserves his own characteristics of style; whereas if the book had really been divinely composed, its style

would have been the same throughout. We answer, this is all too readily assumed. We might as well look for a uniform style in nature. If we found one tree or one landscape clothed in one kind of foliage, or covered with one species of flowers, we might as well argue that all others must wear the same appearance, else they could not be the work of the same Infinite Author. Is not this variety, if we may so say, the style of God? Is it not by endless variety that He adapts himself to all the conditions of man? We can see a most beautiful design in this very matter of diversity of style, and see it in exquisite harmony with analogy. Why did God inspire men at all to speak to humanity? Why did not his revelations drop down from the skies bearing the same uniform characteristics? For this reason, that he spake to this humanity in all its possible conditions, and the revelation must be adapted to all its changing states, from the most outward and sensual to the most inward and spiritual. He therefore spake to it through human minds, used the characteristics of human minds, without their imperfections, to clothe his truth and adapt it to the various wants of men. When He spoke to spiritual minds, he used a spiritual mind, when to the sensual, he used the sensual mind, and brought down his truth into its lowest forms of manifestation. The mind of St. John would not have been a fit medium for the communication of truth to Jews, nor would that of Moses have been fit to clothe the truth in the tender and celestial imagery of St. John. To the Hebrews he gave truth its more gross and outward forms of expression, for it was given to minds in a gross and outward state. For those of the new dispensation He used minds more ethereal, for He spake to another condition of mind. And who shall say that it was not for this very reason, that four gospels were given through the agency of four Revelators, instead of one, that the truth might be adapted in its style and composition to the various stages of man's spiritual life? Matthew and Mark dwell more upon outward facts; Luke and John, and especially the latter, upon the facts of the spiritual consciousness. Each has his own peculiar arrangement, and we cannot doubt that there were peculiar reasons for that arrangement, that Christianity might be contemplated in all its phases, according to the actual wants of the Christian mind. At any rate, the books which have been published called "Harmonies" in which the four narratives are broken up and combined anew, though they may be convenient for reference, instead of harmonizing the

Gospels, seem to us to have jumbled and confounded them. If it be asked, Could not the Spirit of God have revealed his truth without employing various styles of human thought and expression? it might be asked in turn, Could he not do it in this very way, and has he not done it in a manner that shows forth his wisdom and goodness? Nay, can we conceive how otherwise he could have given his truth such various and perfect adaptation to all varieties of mind, and to our ever changing moral and spiritual condition?

4. Another class of objections is founded on some of the contents of the books themselves; passages that contain false morality or false philosophy, such as the imprecations in the Psalms, or the Mosaic account of the Creation, or again, passages which seem to contain inconsistencies of dates and genealogies. There are difficulties of this kind, which we should not undertake to remove, which indeed we should not be anxious to remove, being confident that they would remove themselves, if need be, so fast as the truths already open and manifest are converted into life. Carlyle says, "Do the duty that lies near thee, and thy next duty will have become clear." So he might say, Practise the truth that is plain and manifest, and the next truth will be unveiled and open. We should expect to find just such difficulties and obscurities in a Divine Revelation, just as there are difficulties and obscurities in the book of nature, confident nevertheless that, as in the latter case so in the former, they are underlaid by laws all-harmonizing and all-pervading. In regard to the cases cited, however, we feel no difficulty, for we do not believe that Moses, in the first and second chapters of Genesis, describes the physical creation, any more than he describes, in the third chapter, moral good and moral evil growing on trees in the shape of apples, or a serpent holding an argument with a woman. Nor do we believe the imprecations in the Psalms to be directed against the personal enemies of David, any more than we suppose that in the words "Strong bulls of Bashan beset me round" he intends to describe a personal bull-fight. The whole style, spirit, and imagery of these Psalms, the context of these very passages lead us to suppose, what the great mass of readers and interpreters of all ages have supposed, that they describe the struggles and conflicts of the soul with its spiritual foes. This we might say, even had the quotations from them by our Lord furnished no clue to their interpretation. But all this aside. Such objections as these, while we live in the

general light of the Scriptures, are lost and disappear ; just as the spots on the sun's disk are not seen nor thought of while we live in that general sunlight that bathes the hemisphere in glory.\*

But it is time for us to close this imperfect outline of an argument. And we do it in the full conviction, that few questions are more vital to the interests of religion than this. This subject must yet come up and be canvassed with that thoroughness and profundity which it deserves. We believe it will be found to have more direct and practical reference to the spiritual growth and prosperity of the denomination, than all questions about measures, social excitements and social action, which in view of the vast importance of right doctrine, as a solid rock on which to stand, may well be called "the flutter of the times."

E. H. S.

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\* It will be found, we think, on a candid examination, that what have been assumed as discrepancies and contradictions, will often be proved to be simply variations, such as we may well suppose might be dictated by infinite wisdom for the various adaptations of revealed truth. The inscription upon the cross, as recorded by the four Evangelists, has been assumed as a clear case of discrepancy. There is not the least discrepancy. Matthew reports, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews;" Mark, "The King of the Jews;" Luke, "This is the King of the Jews;" John, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Neither professes to report every thing that was written upon the cross. Suppose that there were no more than the following words, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," and the report of each of the narrators would be strictly and verbally true, each selecting such portion as it served his special purpose to record. We might as well put it down as inconsistency, that each, instead of making his own selection, did not relate every thing which the Saviour ever said or did.

**A THANKSGIVING EXHORTATION FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.**

OUR Russian allies are wrong. They begin their years in September ;—for, they say, were the earth made at any other season, how could Adam and Eve have lived till the harvest were ripe ? This question, we may leave to others. Perhaps the antediluvian new year was celebrated in September. But for us, and with us, times and seasons and customs are changed, and are well changed ; and our year shall begin on the first of January, and no where else.

For not till now, have we felt that the year is indeed renewed. Day—the half of time, which is to us almost the whole—the bright banner of the year's glory, which is furled only as the year's strength falls way, has been growing less and less. We have received, day by day, less and less from the year's treasury of opportunities for active labor, and have had a right to feel that it was passing away, and that its resources were wasted. But now—just now, we are beginning to see that a change has come—that another fold is blown out from the banner—that another master has the charge of the treasury ; and that day—beautiful day—will not grow less and less forever. This change began, they tell us, more than a week ago, as a bright omen for Christmas ;—the darkness began to grow less and the light to grow brighter, just in time to be welcome to us. I honor the poetry, may I not say the sublimity of devotion, of those worthies of the church, who fixed the date of that anniversary ;—so that the sun himself, in his courses, as in speechless voice he sounds the praise of the Creator, should remind all men of the bright light with which the Almighty drove away earth and blackest darkness, and should be an omen of its still increasing brilliancy and power. I honor them for the spirit which would make all nature speak of that which filled their hearts. I have accepted, this year, the omen which they gave us. And now that a week more has fanned the little spark of prolonged day-light into such a flame, that we all fancy we perceive that the days are indeed longer, I would make the general feeling a general presage or promise of general use, of increased opportunity ; and therefore it is,

that I hail this day of this season, when the young phoenix year begins to flap his wings and move about a little, and show that he is not always to be a chick, but will have one day a bright summer vigor, as bright as was the father's from whose ashes he has sprung, as *the day when our calendars should begin for us this happy new year.*

And there is yet another reason, no less in point. Do you know, my kind reader, that this very period is marking a tremendous epoch in your history? Do you know that, within twenty-six hours of your beginning this year, be the precise time more or less, (for how can I tell whether you read the Christian Examiner in Astoria or Singapore,) you have been nearer to the sun than you have been for the whole past year; and, which is more, nearer than you or any other mortal will ever be again. The hospitalities of the hospitable season are not lost on the larger bodies of the system; good mother earth has bent so near to the sun, in her year's course, and he, as fast as his cumbrous weight would let him, has come up so far towards her, that they have wished each other a happy new year. And now she is just starting for another race; and next June, my dear friend, you will be some three millions of miles farther from him, your most constant illuminator, your most faithful of link-boys, than you are now. Alas too! though she and he will both, next winter, approach each other, in this annual bend of courtesy, they will not draw so near as they do now; and another winter, they will be farther yet; and so on, for hundreds of hundreds of years.\* There is, it seems, a gradual coldness creeping in upon their winter intimacy. The more earnestly will you and I, then, note their approach of yesterday. I am sure that, that day when you and I, on mother earth, are first again whirled away from him, so far into this cold ether, is the best of days to plant our monument, and to cry, New Year! — New Year!

Reason enough is there, for us to plant here our monuments. Reason enough, that each of us should wish every other, a happy journey — either till we shall all write another inscription, and set up another stone at the beginning of

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\* The eccentricity of the earth's orbit diminishes gradually, at the rate of thirty-nine and a half miles a year. This diminution will continue, before a retrograde movement, for several centuries.

another year ; or till our paths separate, and one or the other of us exchanges time for eternity. Reason enough, that we should look back on the past, to wonder, to regret, to smile, or to be grateful. Reason enough, that we should all look forward to resolve. Reason enough, that we should pray to God. Reason enough, now, if not always, that we should thank him, especially for the goodness and wisdom which guide the sun in its courses, which appointed the rulers of the day and of the night, for signs, and seasons, and days, and years — for signs of good — for fruitful seasons — for days of rejoicing — and for happy years.

Reason enough now ! — and why not enough always — every day — to arouse this gratitude ? Why, indeed ? Without attempting to say, that it should not or does not rise, we may find the spell which often lulls it to sleep, in the very regularity of the blessing. The very fact of regularity takes from the change of seasons and of days the power of exciting attention at any one particular moment. There is no start, no sudden shock of wonder, to excite gratitude ; for the very circumstance for which we would be grateful, is that quiet passage of things which has run on without startling, or shocking, or terrifying, or surprising us. Certainly, as years and months slip by smoothly and quietly, we do not often remember how different we should be, how different society would be, were we not sure of the regularity with which time's phases are presented to us. *Because* the sun rises regularly every morning, and sets as regularly every evening, it is, that we seldom pause to think of the very singular and disagreeable position in which we should be, if its movements had not this precision. When I engage to do this or that to-morrow morning, I hardly ever pause to think how fortunate I am to know that to-morrow morning will occur, at the precise distance of time which I am contemplating ; — that I may not have to wait till summer before another morning comes. Or when, after a sound night's sleep, I am surprised to find the light returned, my surprise is seldom of such a nature as to lead me to doubt, whether this particular night has, in fact, been more than ten minutes long ; I forget to be grateful for the regularity of the dawn's return, if indeed I am grateful for its return at all. The inconveniences, to which days and

nights of accidental length would submit me, are almost always forgotten.

Of the return of seasons we take more note. We do speak of the regularity of seed time and harvest ; and, at this time, especially, when a *new* year glides in, and we look at the every-day wonders, which only cease to be miracles, because they happen every day, and recollect how much we owe to Providence,—all uniting in joy, as new year's day comes round, and welcoming it, the youngest child being glad that it is here—we are thankful, first of all, for that unerring precision of nature, to which only we owe it that a New Year's day has come.

Reader ! that our gratitude may be somewhat distinct and defined, that its bright beams may not be lost, for want of some poor tissue, some thin smoke-cloud, on which they may fall, and form a clear, and brilliant, and beautiful image, I offer to you this essay. Let us see where we should be, if we had not these regularly recurring seasons around us. Supposing, of course, our existence, and passing by, therefore, all consideration of the physical necessity to the preservation of life of the return of days and months and years, let us look on the intimate connection between this return and our spiritual and intellectual pleasures.

That strange man, William Whiston, formed the theory, that at the creation, the plane of the world's equator and that of the ecliptic were the same ; and that, in consequence, the garden of Eden, and all the rest of the world, was then a land,

Where everlasting Spring abode.

The man, who invented such a paradise, ought to have the only admittance into it. Let us imagine him, or some of his brethren, living in that perennial spring-time ; and, to make the conception complete, we will add an unmoving sun, always on the meridian, to give life, and heat, and splendor, to the ever luxuriant and verdant scene. There is Whiston's paradise !

Now suppose, for a moment, that in it Whiston, or whoever inhabited it, retained any of his intellectual powers, how far would any of them be pleasures ? His memory, for instance, how much vivacity would that have ? What pleasures would he derive from it ? He would have, connected

with it, only the faintest ideas of time. The shipwrecked mariner, as he lies, plank-buoyed, tossing on the ocean, has no very correct ideas of time, as he rises and falls on the waves, with nothing but his own thoughts to arouse him ; but he would be a perfect chronologer, a living chronometer, compared with Whiston, for he can watch the motion of the sun, as it blazes over him, in its daily passage. The martyr at the stake, the invalid under the surgeon's hands, note time passing very correctly ; but they, too, count its seconds much better than *he* could. Where all external change is removed as time goes on, all definite and correct ideas of time vanish, and all the associations, which are the usual guides to memory, vanish too. Our philosopher's recollection of his rather monotonous round of pleasures, of the discovery of beautiful flowers, never the earliest of the season, in some unexpected spot ; his recollection of his intercourse with friends, of his surprizes, his hopes, and his fears, such as they were, would precisely resemble the recollections which he might have of a dream, as he awoke some noon, perfect enough in details, but without the slightest connection or sequence. Every event, in such reminiscences, would appear as if contemporary with every other ; or rather, no one could have any means of telling which came first in the order.

But we need not taunt our victim with want or failure of memory. He would tell us, and tell us truly, that to him that failure was no loss ; it would have been useless to him, had he possessed it. What is to him a perfectly adjusted and regular recollection of a life, the externals of which, and, in consequence, the internal emotions of which, have been so miserably monotonous ? After the earliest years of his life, he never sees anything new, anything to excite attention ; his powers of observation are wholly satiated, for these same objects of nature have always been before him, in this same form. What use of memory of scenes, and prospects, and processes of nature, when he has only to open his eyes, and look round, and see precisely the same again ? Better for him, if he could *wholly* forget ; if he had not this dreamy form of memory, just vigorous enough to rob his world and its changes of all novelty. You have stripped him of anniversaries, of pleasant associations with changing seasons. His life has been a barren steppe, without a mountain pros-

pect or cascade, without a stream, without a grove, without a rock, without even a cloud, or a whirlwind, or a simoom, or a moving sand column, to destroy its terrible uniformity. You, happy mortal, welcome the freshness of spring, the maturity of summer, the sudden and gorgeous changes of autumn ; and, as this fades away into winter, you are cheered by the confidence, that from this death will spring the luxuriance and perfection of another year. With him, there is no freshness ; nothing is renewed ; there is no change, and he has nothing for which to hope. You enjoy, in summer, the beauties of nature with the more zest, because you have been debarred from them ; and as, in your comfortable home, you laugh at the rigors of winter, you enjoy winter's hospitality and novelty the more, from the half-novelty of their forms. All such excitement would be lost, in the sickly, green-house life, which we have been imagining. The richer nature's sweets may be, the more surely would they cloy, if presented without variety.

In the perennial spring, then, man has no memory of any value, no power of recollection, and no variety from time to time. Without these, where would be the pleasures or the powers of imagination ? A man unaccustomed to see changes around him, and in himself, can form no conception of such changes, worthy of the name. Our highest imagination uses no materials, I believe, which are not furnished it by mental or physical operations, which have before existed. Caspar Hauser, for instance, in his cell, could have imagined nothing, but the various ways in which mice could cross it, or other such matters of internal regulation. He could not, in fancy even, call up an idea of the sun or the stars, or of anything beyond the class of his existing ideas and conceptions. Homer could imagine no gods, whose attributes were not in kind human ; their exercise of those attributes differed only in degree from those of men. If he had never observed, he could never have imagined. And, with reverence we say it, we have no conception of any attribute of an infinite God, of which we have not seen or known some exercise.

The experimenting philosopher, then, would have the most useless memory ; only a halting power of recollection ; no variety of life ; the coldest imagination only ; and, consequent on this, of course, the weakest curiosity. Where, to him, would be the charm of society ? What sympathy with

others' thoughts, where thoughts were so few? What pleasure in sympathy with others' feelings, when of necessity all feelings were so nearly the same? What interest in conversation among such forgetful, dreamy, matter-of-fact, and listless creatures? What hope for the future?

And so I might go on to speak of the tastes and faculties and pleasures closely bound to these which I have named, but that the urging farther this conception of a wise man's paradise would make the suggestion appear absurd; and I have not introduced it here to raise a smile. No! it is in sincere thankfulness that I contrast our happy world with such a paradise.

I find that I am freed from any such cursing monotony, on the one hand, and on the other, that I may rely on a regularity of change, sufficient to enable me to profit by life's experience. With quite enough variety in my existence, I am, still, not launched on every new day or month without any ability to foresee in part what it may bring me. Winter does not surprise me unprepared, for I have met, and struggled with, and conquered his rigors before. My friend, the farmer, ploughs and sows in the way which last year's experience taught him; the merchant, of whom I buy, lays in his stores, I find; my landlord builds new dwellings; my sailor classmate arranges his voyage, all relying on the same experience. Nor is this all. This regularity has a deeper effect on our actions. The statesmen, who govern us, plan their codes and laws, in certain faith, that what has been will be; in my studies of nature, I investigate her laws of metamorphosis, certain that another summer will give me another opportunity to make my theoretical botany practical. I prescribe for my patients, I regulate their movements and their lives, with the same certainty in an established climate. And, more than this, I find that every inquiring mind not only supposes, and calculates on this regularity of natural movement, but examines it with a certain wonder, as he reflects upon it and asks whence it comes. The philanthropist looks at it with pleasure, for in such varying phases he finds room for the action of every variety of men. The studious philosopher tells me, that in this change he finds the all-governing principle of love, that, in all, it teaches him how there may be unity in variety. The warm-hearted worshipper turns with new ardor to his God; he finds in all this variety of beneficence new supports for the reason which accompanies his faith; and while he sees a type of man's existence in the decaying seed and the opening germ; in

the verdure springing from the decay of the forest leaves ; in the melting snow and the swelling river ; in the tide ebbing only to flow again ; he finds in the whole course of nature something more than a type ; a sure proof of God's mercy ; and that his providence is in all.

Here is the point to which I have been looking ; here is the thread of my New Year's Exhortation to Thanksgiving. Though man knows that the existence of his mind and its powers is wholly independent of the material world around him, he finds that every detail in the movement of that material world is so arranged, that those powers have or may have full exercise, that they do not rust out, or lose their balance for want of use. Man, with the noblest mental abilities, with the loftiest spiritual hopes, is not placed in the perennial summer of the sun's centre, in the perennial spring-time of a fancied paradise, in the perennial winter of a distant planet, or in the deadening though ephemeral existence of a comet, whose summer's day and whose winter's night each compasses half of eternity; is not placed where mind and soul could not live in vigor, but where, and where only, they could be exercised and strengthened. Man's mind, his soul, is not imprisoned, nor left to wander in a desert, or a jungle, or a tropical savannah, is not left without nature's beauties or with a single series of self-poisoned ones ; but is free in the wonders and changes and ever new delights of our dear, our beautiful world. Man, all fitted as he is for time, is not banished unprepared into an eternity. That man may be happy, that man may be strong, that man's soul may grow, that all his powers may be one day presented faultless before his Maker, does the world hang where it does in space, do its movements, and those of the sun which guides it, pass as they do in time. For this does the Creator watch them in the constant now of his eternity.

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## THE LATE ALDEN BRADFORD, ESQ.

Mr. BRADFORD died in Boston, October 26th, aged seventy eight years. He was a native of the town of Duxbury, in Plymouth county. He was graduated at Harvard college in 1786, being a member of the class illustrated by the names of Chief Justice Parker, Speaker Bigelow, John Lowell, President Harris, Senators Champlin and Thompson, and others, living and dead, who have rendered distinguished services in church and state. He was tutor at Cambridge two or three years, pursued theological studies under the direction of the venerable Dr. West of Dartmouth, and after receiving invitations to settle in some other places, was, in 1793, ordained to the pastoral charge of the Congregational Church in Wiscasset, Maine. After a diligent and acceptable ministry of eight years in this place, he was compelled by failing health to retire, and was soon after appointed Clerk of the Supreme Court for the county of Lincoln.

In 1811, in consequence (if the memory of the writer is not in fault) of the passage of a law transferring the appointment of the clerks from the Judges to the Governor and Council, he was displaced by Governor Gerry, along with other prominent adherents of the Federal school of politics. A very effective paper, which he soon after published, on the political aspects of the times, procured for its author a high reputation, and on the restoration of his party to power, the next year, he was appointed to the office of Secretary of the Commonwealth. The important duties of this honorable place he continued to discharge with characteristic zeal and assiduity, and apparently to the satisfaction of all parties, for twelve years, at the end of which time he was superseded, on the accession of a government of the adverse political creed. He then removed to New Bedford, and, as a Justice of the Peace, was engaged for some years in duties of the class which, since the institution of the Police Court, have devolved upon that tribunal. In 1836 he received a commission as Notary Public, and since that time has been an inhabitant of this city.

Mr. Bradford's natural bent of mind, confirmed by the circumstances of his early years, created a taste for literary pursuits,

which never forsook him, and which he always found opportunities to gratify, amidst the engagements of a busy life. Numerous publications, in the departments of history and theology, attest his steady diligence. Descended from different families of the Pilgrims, and himself the representative of the second Governor of the Old Colony, (the first, whose administration was long enough to leave an impress on the infant state,) the deeds and characters of those venerable men were always to him a subject of intensely interesting inquiry, and few men have acquired a more familiar acquaintance with our early history. His theological works, manifesting themselves uniformly as the fruits of candid, inquisitive, and upright investigation, and betokening the action of a kind and Christian spirit, would have attracted more attention, had they appeared at that different period of theological inquiry in this country, when their author's opinions were formed. Among the most important of the productions of his pen were a History of Massachusetts from 1764 to 1820, a History of the Federal Government from 1789 to 1839, a Biographical Dictionary of the New England worthies, a Popular Commentary upon the Four Gospels, and a Life of Dr. Jonathan Mayhew; besides which he is understood to have left in manuscript a Chronology of New England, from the time of its discovery to 1820, and copious additions to his History of Massachusetts, prepared with a view to a new edition. Mr. Bradford was a Doctor of Laws, President of the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, and a Fellow of the Historical and Antiquarian Societies of Massachusetts, and of various other associations for similar objects throughout the country.

He has well deserved to be held in honorable and grateful remembrance. He was a man of sterling and independent honesty, in speculation, in purpose, and in act. He passed cheerfully through life, amid some circumstances of trial and discouragement, attended by the good angel of an inflexible and buoyant trust in God. He had a generous and hearty public spirit. His tastes were only for useful and liberal pursuits. His activity was indefatigable; there was no more danger of his mind being permitted to rust on the eve of four-score, than in the bloom of life. He was perfectly candid and tolerant; he readily allowed every rightful claim of others, and made no parade of his own; and in his preferences of sect and party, there was no alloy of narrowness or ill-will. It was a pleasure to him to do a service to friend or stranger. He had the kindest affections, an eminently social disposition, and a tenderness

of sensibility which is rarely seen to outlast so much experience. He lived the happy life of one whose aims and feelings are righteous, elevated, pure, and Christian, and he died happy in the full, though unostentatious enjoyment of an intelligent believer's hope.

P.

## NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*The influence of Scientific Discovery and Invention on social and Political Progress. Oration delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, on Commencement day, September 6, 1843.* By JOB DURFEE. Providence: B. Cranston & Company. 1843.

"THE Gospel of Arkwright," to use the peculiar phraseology of that most peculiar being Thomas Carlyle, is proving itself to be more of a gospel, than many seem to know of; it preaches glad tidings to man, by universalizing civilization and knowledge, by cheapening the commodities of life, by bettering the situation of the poor generally, by equalizing the condition of man, and preparing the human mind for the reception of high moral and spiritual truths; and we are glad that it has found so able an interpreter in our friend the Chief Justice of Rhode-Island. The address before us is something better than a highly finished literary performance; it is the work of a thinker and a philosopher, and the eloquence of thought is well sustained by the force and beauty of language in which it is clothed. We knew the author before only as a poet, and save a few official papers from his pen, especially during the late troublous times, in our sister State, his "Whatcheer," with Roger Williams for its hero, which was reviewed and lauded in England, is the only thing of the Judge's we have read. In that, however, we found not only much sweet verse and many highly poetical passages, but also a depth of thought, a spirituality of feeling, and an ardent love of "the largest liberty," though the work is of too quiet and serene a character to be popular in an excitement-loving community like ours. After we had perused, this *Φ B K* oration, we felt that our Rhode Island brethren have good reason to regard the Judge as intellectually their strongest man, and that they may well be proud of him.

In the early part of his speech, a complaint is made, that "we are disposed to ascribe too much of human progress to particular forms of government — to particular political institutions, arbitrarily established by the will of the ruler, or wills of the masses, in accordance with some theoretic abstraction. And this is natural enough in a country where popular opinion makes the law. But, to the mind that has formed the habit of penetrating beyond effects into the regions of causes, it may, I think, appear that the will of the one, or the will of the many, equally are under the dominion of a higher law than any they may ordain; and that political and social institutions are, in the end, drawn or constrained to all their *substantial* improvements, by an order of mind still in advance of that which rules in politics, and flatters itself that dominion is all its own." He goes on to state the proposition, that "When the arts and sciences became stationary, all social and political institutions became stationary; when the arts and sciences became progressive, all social and political institutions became progressive." He thence declares, "That we are not to seek for the causative energy of human progress in the wisdom of the political, but in that of the scientific and inventive mind. Let it moreover be recollected, that at least in these our times the scientific and inventive genius has a universality, which elevates it above all human jurisdiction; that it belongs to the whole humanity, and can be monopolized by no government; and that its discoveries and inventions walk the earth with the freedom of God's own messengers."

"The scientific and inventive genius of the race," he continues, "requires government upon the penalty of ceasing to exist, to carry out to the utmost extent, both in the social and political spheres, every important discovery and invention, and thus coerces, by a process its own, obedience to its supreme authority. But what is this process? It may be a short, but it is a sufficient answer for the occasion, to say, that it is the elevation of mind over matter; in the material universe, it is the extension of the dominion of man over the powers and forces of nature; in humanity, it is the orderly elevation of the high moral and intellectual energies over the brute force of passion, prejudice, and ignorance. In the realm of science and art, the most exalted geniuses and the brightest intellects, that it contains, are ever at the head of affairs. They are there, not by the appointment of government, nor by the election of the masses, but by a decree of the Supreme Intelligence." And here we would pause and congratulate our author, that in place of any of the spurious systems so prevalent at the present day, he has imbibed the true spirit of that genuine philosophy, that looks up to the Infinite Being as the

Source of all human progress, as the Teacher as well as Father of his children; and hence has learned to regard all men as brethren, bound together by the ties no hand can sever—one great indivisible unity. There are evidences too plainly to be mistaken, that this is growing to be the philosophy and theology of the coming time.

There seems to be in human progress two separate tendencies; first, the tendency to outward order, beauty, and comfort; that is, the true developing itself as the useful; and, second, the development of intellectual and spiritual order. And the former is the forerunner, and paves the way for the latter. As preparatory steps to a high intellectual and spiritual culture, we shall first observe the endeavor to improve and make convenient and beautiful the outward life; and secondly, the bringing man in contact with his fellow man the world over, and thus making universal the great gifts of civilization. Personal labor being thus rendered lighter and the supply of all outward wants facilitated; opportunity and leisure are allowed men to turn their attention from the outward to the inward world, from the world of matter to the world of mind. And thus the spiritual nature, the divine life, the principle of love commences its manifestations in the conscious action of individual minds. While reason indicates the necessity of these preparatory steps, History proves their existence in the action of human life.

At first, all science, and all high culture is with the few; in the words of our author, "In the realm of science and art, the most exalted geniuses and the brightest intellects that it contains are ever at the head of affairs. They are there not by the appointment of government, nor by the election of the masses, but by a decree of the Supreme Intelligence." The "Archimedean stand-point" on which the scientific intellect takes his commanding station to move the earth, is in an elevation "far above the world and its turmoils;" here "the scientific philosopher interrogates the deity of truth, and communicates its oracles to the whole nether humanity; confident that as they are *true*, whatever may be their present effect, they will ultimately promote the progress of the race. Nor is he at liberty to abstain from interrogating this deity; to refrain from the efforts to discover and consequently to invent, whenever a discovery is to be actualized by invention. That law, which prompts the mind spontaneously to search for the cause of every effect, and for the most effectual means for the accomplishment of the end, is not superinduced by education. It comes from a source above man; it is constitutional, therefore irresistible, and he makes his inventions and discoveries because he must make them." "But where and what," inquires

our author, "is this point on which the scientific intellect takes this commanding stand? It is not to be found in that space which can be measured by the glance of the eye, or a movement of the hand. It is to be found only in the world of mind; and even there, only in that *perfect reason*, which is at once a *law to humanity*, and the revealer of all truth."

Every where the Chief Justice shows himself in the *highest sense* of the term a rationalist. He puts no faith in mysteries; he believes in interrogating every thing, and demanding its *reason*; — in going to causes — to first principles, no matter how deep they may be hidden. And not on any "political abstractions" does our assurance of progress depend, but on those progressive tendencies of our very nature to which we have before alluded. It has been said that he, who made two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, is a great benefactor of his race; the same may be said of him, through whose direct or indirect agency two yards of cloth, or two pages of print, are produced for the same price, that was formerly paid for one; or of him who has reduced one half the fare for travel-transportation from one portion of the earth to another; for such do more to elevate the physical, mental, and moral condition of humanity, and to carry out farther the principles of a true equalizing democracy, than any abstract theory of republicanism or any legislative action. But we will give place to an abler pen than ours, and present the reader with an extract from an eloquent illustration of our author's from a thought suggested by an invention in a branch of mechanic art.

"I lately," he says, "visited an establishment, perhaps in some respects the first of the kind in our country, for the manufacture of iron into bars. I stood by, and for the time, witnessed the operation of its enginery. I saw the large misshapen mass of crude metal taken blazing from the furnace, and passed through the illumined air to the appropriate machine. I saw it there undergo the desired transformation. It was made to pass repeatedly between two grooved revolving iron cylinders, of immense weight. At every turn of the wheel, it took new form; it lengthened, stretched, approximating still its intended shape, till at the end of the operation it came forth a well fashioned fifteen or twenty-feet bar of iron, ready for the hand of the artizan, or the machine that was to resolve it into forms for ultimate use. When I had witnessed this process, I thought I did not want to go to the banks of the Nile to be assured either of the antiquity or the progress of the race. An older than the pyramids was before me; one which, though voiceless, told a tale that commenced before the Pharaohs, before the Memnon, before Thebes. Here was a material which had been common to the historical portion of the human family for the space of five or six thousand years. Millions on millions of minds had been tasked to improve the process of its manufacture. I went back in imagination to that

primitive age, when the first unskilful hand, some fur-clad barbarian or savage, drew a mass of the raw material from the side of some volcanic mountain. He constructed a vessel of clay for its reception, and somewhat in imitation of the process he had witnessed, he placed it over a heap of burning combustibles. With long and patient labor and care, he reduced it to a liquid mass; and then cast it into the shape of some rude implement of husbandry or war. Exulting in his success, he branned the instrument in triumph, and deemed it the *ne plus ultra* of human improvement.

"He disappeared; but he left a successor. I followed him in imagination, and saw him take the art at the point at which his predecessor had left it. He had discovered that the metal was not only friable but ductile; and with sweat and toil that knew no fatigue, he gradually beat the heated mass into the shape of something like a hatchet or a sword; but his successor came and still improved on the labors of his predecessor. Generation thus followed generation of apt apprentices in the art; they formed a community of masters, skilful to direct and of servants prompt to obey. They fashioned new implements as their numbers increased, and the wants of advancing civilization varied and multiplied. The master minds studied, and studied successfully, all the various qualities and susceptibilities of the metal. They became skilful in all its various uses in agriculture, commerce, manufactures and war."...

"This brought me to the process which I had just witnessed, and I thought I saw in it the grand result of the discipline and labor of the race for thousands of years. I thought I saw in it not only the reality of a progress in the race, but the unquestionable proof of the existence of a law of progress, carrying on its grand process through the whole humanity by a logical series of causes and effects, from its earliest premises, in far distant antiquity, to its latest result; and that the law, which rules in discovery and invention, is one and identical with that which governs in the progress of the race."

After glancing at Egyptian civilization, and thence to Grecian, our author says, "They (the Corinthians) invented the war galley of three banks of oars. They constructed a navy of like craft. This was followed by great results; they cleared the Grecian seas of pirates; nations settled on the coast, and by like means kept them clear. The Mediterranean was laid open to honest traffic; commerce flourished, the arts flourished. The Grecian communities took the longest stride in the infancy of their progress, from this simple *improvement* in naval *architecture*, the longest, with the exception of that made by the Trojan war."

He passes the gulph of the middle ages with this single observation, "that it was a season during which Christianity was engaged in humanizing and softening the heart of barbarism, and thus qualifying its mind to take form under the influence of modern art and science."

In conclusion, the Judge describes very eloquently and justly, the influence of several of the most important inventions of modern times. We wish we had space to quote the whole, in

justice to the author as well as the reader, but are compelled to close abruptly both our remarks and our extracts.

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*A Centennial Discourse, delivered to the First Congregational Church and Society, in Leominster, Sept. 24, 1843, it being the completion of a century since the organization of said church, with an Appendix. By RUFUS P. STEBBINS, Minister of the First Congregational Society in Leominster. Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown. 1840.*

EVERY town has, of necessity, its history ; and it is a pity it should, in any instance, remain an unwritten one. If written with tolerable judgment and ability, everything would, at least, possess a deep local interest, if not a general value. To the inhabitants of a village, the most trivial incidents, connected with its early annals, have about them a certain romantic charm, little, or not at all perceived, by others ; but, to themselves, of more account than the most famous volumes of earlier or later fiction. The names of the first settlers, the sites of their dwellings, their manners, their morals, and their strangely fashioned garments, their deeds of valor with the wild beast, or the wilder Indian, their family feuds, and, above all, their religious controversies, are more to them than the world-renowned achievements of Achilles or Tancred. Methuen, Sharon, and Seekonk, can boast their quarrels, and their reconciliations, their heroes, their wise men, their Hectors, and their Nestors, their Hampdens, and their Franklins. No name of virtue, or of courage, should be permitted to die. It may not be made to live to the wide world, by any fame a history of a town can confer ; but it will be remembered and honored by a posterity, grateful for the actions and the virtues of those who laid the foundations of their little state, and may serve as well as names of greater note, to awaken in the breast of the village school-boy a generous ambition,— to teach lessons of wise conduct, patient endurance, unyielding perseverance, of duty, of patriotism, of religious trust.

Leominster is one of our more modern towns, its history going back no further than to the beginning of the last century. The first settler set up his log cabin in 1725. Yet its history possesses no little interest ; not, indeed, the interest of stirring incident, but which is better, of high-principled character. If Mr. Stebbins had done nothing more than rescue from neglect the name of John Rogers, he would have entitled himself to the thanks of every one, who holds in honor independence of mind, bold and honest utterance of opinion. The ministry of Mr. Rogers is the central point of attraction in this history ; and it is

something for a town to boast of, to have had a man of so much character — to say nothing of his descent from the famous martyr of the same name — to figure in its annals. This person was not only a Unitarian, but a martyr to his heretical opinions ; that is to say, he was driven from his parish by a council, who could not endure that a brother should think differently from themselves, or rather, that he should speak out his thoughts ; for many of them, Mr. Rogers declares, held the same doctrine with himself. The letter of Mr. Rogers to his church, after his sentence of dismission had been pronounced, will give an impression of the man, and a picture of his times.

**CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND BRETHREN:**

I lament that we must be separated. I suffered and toiled with you to establish this church. Most of those, who laid the foundation of this altar of God in the wilderness, still stand with me. My enemies are mostly those who came among us, as strangers, whom we welcomed with a Christian affection to our table of communion, and house of worship ; but who have now, ungratefully, like the serpent in the fable, bitten their benefactors. The council, too, which have advised you to this course, are not free from guilt. Some of them, and not a few, think as I do on those very doctrines which they pronounce so fatal, and which they call upon me, in the pitiful tones of children, to renounce. I forgive them their sin. May God forgive them. Posterity will revise their decision, and judge their characters. I do not understand why I should be singled out, from the other ministers around me, to be made a victim. I differ from them in nothing, without it is in frankly declaring what I do believe. Their opinions are like mine. I confess that, on some points, I have modified my opinions since I came among you ; and I am grieved to think, that any are so simple as to suppose it an indication of mental weakness, or perfidy of heart, or treachery to duty, to grow wiser as one grows older, and studies longer. John Robinson warned his church to beware of thinking that no more light would beam out of the Word of God ; expressly warning them not to stick fast, as some did, where Calvin left the truth, but to follow on after more truth. Our covenant, it is true, implies the doctrine of the Trinity, but it does not require any one always to believe it ; it expressly exhorts us to study the Word of God both day and night, and to conform ourselves thereunto. I have done so. Am I guilty of a crime ? I am willing to be classed with Newton, and Milton, and Locke, and other good and great men, in the opinions which I hold. No one need be ashamed in their company. As for recanting my opinions, Christian friends, I cannot do it. God and my conscience would both condemn me. I could not think of myself but with shame. My ancestor suffered the torture of fire, and death at the stake, rather than recant, or conceal his opinions ; could I meet him in heaven without a blush, if I should deny what I believe to be God's truth ? Could I answer to my Master, Christ ? Judge ye. I lament to be cut off from you. I am poor, and know not where to go. My little ones cry around me for bread. Still I will trust in God, who has never yet forsaken me. He

will care for me and mine. I hope, if you do expel me from the office of Pastor, that you will pay me what you owe me. For ten years I have been willing to share in your poverty, by not calling for a portion of my salary which was justly due to me. Now if I am to be cast abroad upon the world, I feel as if I must be permitted to receive what is necessary to my very existence. But no more of this. The extremest want alone could have compelled me to mention it in this connexion. Brethren, pause before you act. Consider, I pray you, what will be the end of these things; what will be thought of this, after we are all in our graves. God give you wisdom to act in this matter, as you will all wish you had, when you stand in His presence to answer for this deed. And may the great Head of the Church keep you, and build you up in truth and holiness ever more.

Your devoted, yet aggrieved Pastor,

JOHN ROGERS.

But Mr. Rogers was not forsaken by all, though driven from his church and his living. A few adhered to him to the last days of his life; and to them, as a separate congregation, he continued to preach the gospel, in his own interpretation of it. Of these last days, let Mr. Stebbins speak.

"Mr. Rogers continued to preach in the school house, to his few, but devoted, faithful adherents, till his body was bowed with the weight of years and cares, and his head white with the frosts of age. During the last years of his ministry, he preached during the winter in his own house, which stood on the spot now occupied by the house of Deacon Moses Richardson. His infirmities became so great, that in 1788, after having ministered to his little flock twenty-six years, he desired to be excused from his labors, to which his people consented; and they generously voted to pay him his salary for three years, fifteen pounds each year. He did not live, however, but a short time after this arrangement. He died the sixth of October, 1789, in the forty-seventh year of his ministry, and in the seventy-seventh year of his age. His remains lie in our burying ground, without a stone to mark their resting place, and his grave, like the old Patriarch's, is unknown unto this day. Thus labored, and suffered, and died, Rev. John Rogers, the first settled minister of this town. His labors appear to have been blessed by the Head of the Church. During these fourteen years, one hundred and six members united with the church, though a large proportion were by letter, and twenty-nine united with his church after the separation; in all, one hundred and thirty-five. There were, during his ministry, three hundred and fifty-eight baptisms, and seventy-three marriages. He was a descendant of John Rogers, the first martyr under Queen Mary. He was born in Boxford, September, 1712. He was the son of Rev. John Rogers, of Boxford, who was the son of Jeremiah Rogers, of Salem, who was the grandson, as is supposed, of Nathaniel Rogers, of Ipswich, who came from England in 1636, and who was the second son of John Rogers of Dedham, England, who was the son of one of the ten children of John the martyr."

From a note, we learn that, "in good time, a monument will be erected over the grave of John Rogers, if it can be found; if

not, it will probably stand on the spot which his pulpit covered, now enclosed within the burying ground."

We cannot follow down the thread of this history, and will only add, that it is well drawn up; and, we may suppose, well worthy of trust, the town and parish records, together with private journals, being the sources of his authority.

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*A Discourse, embracing several important objections to the doctrine, "That Jesus Christ, as Mediator, possesses two natures, the divine and human, in mysterious, yet all harmonious union." In reply to a recently published Sermon, delivered by the Rev. Daniel Baker, in the First and Second Presbyterian Churches, Richmond, Va. By J. B. PITKIN, Pastor of the First Independent Christian Church, Richmond, Va. Richmond: Printed by Samuel Shepherd & Co. 1834. Charleston: Reprinted by B. B. Hussey. 1843.*

*A Sermon preached on Fast Day, before the First Congregational Society, in Burlington, Vt., by their Minister, GEORGE G. INGERSOLL. University Press, Burlington: Printed by Stilman Fletcher. 1843.*

*Our Faith. A Sermon, delivered in the First Church in Beverly, May 7, 1843. By CHRISTOPHER T. THAYER, Minister of that Church. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1843.*

*"What Thinkest Thou?" A Sermon, preached in the Twelfth Congregational Church, Boston, Sunday, March 5, 1843. By SAMUEL BARRETT, Minister of that Church. Boston: Printed by Tuttle & Dennett. 1843.*

THESE are all doctrinal discourses. Mr. Pitkins' is reprinted from the first edition in 1834. It is a clear and able argument on the old controversy, popular in its form, and calculated to produce an impression on the reader. As a tract for distribution it must be considered very good. The other sermons are more recent, preached and published within the year; and well worthy of the established reputations of the writers.

These sermons, with many others of the same character, but, especially, the language adopted at the late convention in Providence, indicate a tendency to return to the forms of doctrinal preaching, so common twenty-five years ago. At Providence, the opinion prevailed almost universally in favor of it, as essential to the progress of truth. But few voices were heard on the opposite side. Our sympathies, however, were with the minority, and we truly regret that the present tendency is so strong toward

doctrinal and controversial writing, preaching, and printing. If, indeed, doctrine — meaning by the term, the doctrine about which Christians differ — possesses the importance commonly attached to it in the minds of men, then it ought to be taught in every way, from the pulpit and from the press, by private and public indoctrination in every form. But the question is first to be settled, whether it does in fact possess a value which entitles it to the regard in which we hold it, and to the efforts we are always making for its spread ; whether more of evil than of good does not come of so exclusive an affection for it. It seems to us that this game of sectarianism has long enough been played before the world. Ever since we have heard of religion, have we heard the everlasting din of the arms of contending sects, fighting for the ascendancy of doctrine. It would seem that whatever good can come of such devotion to the interests of party doctrine, ought by this time to be plainly apparent. But where and what are its fruits ? The doctrine of the Trinity was disputed in the second century. Is it settled now ? In the reign of Constantine, the Christian world was nearly equally divided on the great question. How is it now ? If we look back upon the past, we perceive that it has been this interest in doctrine, this bigotted attachment to opinion, that has kept one half the Christian world at war with the other. It is doctrine, the doctrine about which Christians have differed, never the truth they have held in common, that has shed the blood of martyrs and reformers. It is doctrine that has kindled and fed the fires of all religious wars, of the thirty years' war in Germany, and the other thirty years' wars that the history of every Christian nation has witnessed. It was doctrine that built and nourished the Inquisition, that laid waste the fields and cities of the Albigenses, that flooded the streets of Paris with the blood of Protestants, and has, in a word, caused more human misery than even the civil wars and discords of mankind. And at the present time, though it sheds no blood, the spirit that made it flow is the same as ever, for the reason that the cause, a false idea of the value of doctrine, still exists. There is hatred, black, malignant, ill-concealed hatred, or a deep mutual aversion in the hearts of all members of rival sects ; and as all are striving for the ascendancy, all sects are rivals one to another. They hate one another, or one another's doctrine — if there is practically any difference — and the aim of each is to supplant another ; and as for the measures used to reach this end, all are resorted to without flinching, that make so base and abominable the most unprincipled political partisan warfare. Misrepresentations, lyings, deceivings, backbitings and revilings, slanderous insinuations and reports, missstatements and exaggerations, libellous sermons, blas-

phemous prayers, imprecations of God's vengeance, pious frauds, all these are freely set in motion to carry a point of doctrine, or to bring suspicion and discredit on that of an opponent. And where there is, in any case, an apparent mildness and harmony, it is apparent only, since, of necessity, the same cause being the motive power, namely, a false and exaggerated idea of the value of doctrine and of our duty towards it, the heart is kept in a state of enmity, though circumstances, or natural kind affections, may lay a restraint or impose decency upon its expression. But we truly believe, that were no such restraint felt, the Catholic would, this very day and hour, drive the Protestant from his churches, or the Protestant the Catholic; the Presbyterian would turn upon the Episcopalian, and grind him to powder — the Episcopalian do the same office by the Presbyterian, and step by step, blood and ruin would ensue. The most loathsome of all tyrannies would again sit upon its filthy throne. A false estimate of the worth of doctrine has done this in ages past, and will in those to come, if it shall as formerly, keep possession of, and delude the mind.

It will be said, that it is not doctrine that has done all this, but an unrighteous bigotry to opinion, an unholy zeal. But what stirs so the zeal, and rouses and kindles to a flame the passions of men? What but the *idea* presented in the doctrine, and how can the exciting idea ever be excluded? By attaching so paramount a value to the doctrinal idea, the affections are too forcibly drawn to it, and it is made a duty of conscience to defend it. The evil comes from attaching this value to doctrine. Once attached, and a spirit of theological strife for party ends is an inevitable effect. And how is the evil aggravated by the additional excitements, springing from party combinations, and associated efforts. The spirit of theological party warfare is one too dangerous to be encouraged or permitted. It is to be dreaded as an enormous evil, a direful curse, when lashed to fury by the measures of contending sects. There is no setting limits, then, to the mischief it may do. We can never say to what lengths of uncharitableness and mutual injury it may carry us. Like another spirit, total abstinence is our only safety, the only safety for mankind. Moderate use will end in immoderate use. It has always been so, it will always be so. Our own sect has generally been moderate in its draughts, but we have heretofore seen, and now see again, signs of drunkenness. All other sects we behold contending with furious zeal for and against peculiar opinions, and we have thought that we ought to do the same. Without doing so, we fear we should not be thought to be in earnest, or to prize our faith. But

just in the proportion that we imitate others in thinking duty to peculiar doctrines a prime and essential one, shall we inevitably imitate them in their violences, and uncharitableness, against which we have heretofore so strenuously protested. As they have done, so shall we do — drink to excess, even to fatal excess, into the same spirit whose spell is too potent to be withheld by poor human nature. Total abstinence is our only hope of safety.

But these positive evils are not the only ones that have been inflicted by an exaggerated and false estimate of the importance of doctrine — of the doctrine that distinguishes one sect from another. It is well to look not only at what it has inflicted, but at what it has deprived us of. Whatever it may have conferred of worth, it has deprived us of the various pleasures of a harmonious Christian union throughout the vast body of Christ's followers in all ages. For love and union, there has been hatred and separation. Yet who can forbear to imagine how different a scene in all the ages past would have been presented, had the heart of the whole Christian world beat with the same throb of love. Yet this loss is by no means all, or the worst. It has deprived us of all the zeal and effort, of infinite treasures of wealth, hitherto wasted in sectarian movements for the ascendancy of peculiar party doctrines, which might otherwise have been directed against those real evils which Religion was sent to abate and exterminate — wickedness and sin. Who shall say what glorious scenes of virtue and of Christian union would now gladden the heart, had the moral energies and the uncounted wealth, worse than wasted in the manner and for the ends for which they have been employed, all been poured into one channel of active warfare against the hosts of sin — if sin, and not error, had been the object of attack; still more if not only Christians in separate and feeble bands, or as individuals, but in one united mass, with their whole collective force of moral feeling and concentrated action, had thrown themselves upon the vices and evil customs of mankind, how could they have stood their ground as they have done? And is it not true, that while the Church has been seen fiercely engaged through all the centuries of her history, in contending for metaphysical abstractions, for doctrinal differences, which the mass of men could not even obscurely comprehend, sin has gained fresh courage and assumed a bolder tone? It has felt as if itself were not the worst thing by any means, that speculative error, or an intellectual blunder, was a greater crime and far more hateful to God — seeing that his Church, the wise and the great, all hierarchies and powers, had so exhausted their forces in attacks upon it, as almost, often quite in the comparison, to overlook and forget it.

self. That terrific engine, the Inquisition, has been seen instituted and working its horrors against those who have thought, not those who have lived, amiss. How can unbelievers, and the *world*, as we call it, fail to receive impressions unfavorable to revelation, when they stand by and observe the selfish wranglings of theologians, the bitter hostilities between church and church? They behold huge conventions of Christ's ministers gathered together annually in our cities for purposes nominally religious. What are their great, their real objects, their real effects? Let the late Episcopal convention in New York answer. Are all the sects in such gatherings seen combining their powers against the universal enemy of God and man? or not rather each sect seen bending its energies to the maintenance of its own peculiar doctrine, fighting for the shadows of opinion? So, too, when the world turns over the leaves of our religious literature, how many pages of controversy about doctrine, of anger and all uncharitableness, does it find for one of a generous philanthropy, for one of a manly piety — how many of talent, of all a lawyer's astuteness, bestowed upon the subtleties of a metaphysical argument, for one of pure Christian affections kindled and glowing for any cause of human welfare? Sometimes we are inclined to think that every doctrinal pamphlet or sermon, on a subject like that of the Trinity, makes more infidels out of those who stand by and watch the absurd conflict, than it ever makes of Unitarians on the one hand, or of Trinitarians on the other.

But, it will be said, are we not to have and to set a value on our distinctive doctrine, on those shades of opinion which constitute the peculiarity of our creed? Yes; but not too high a value. Here lies the grand error of Christians. Sectarian doctrine, this doctrine about which men differ, and which we would be understood to mean when we employ the term doctrine, has had a false value put upon it, has been erected into the grand all-essential; has been, in truth, substituted in men's creeds, and affections, and reverence, for those greater absolute truths, about which all are agreed. The universal truths of Religion, concerning which there has never been dispute, are the truths we should value, about which all our affections should gather, on which we should rest our hopes. That these are the great and all-essential truths, we may feel some good assurance in the fact, that they receive, without variance, the united homage of mankind. For these, zeal can hardly be too warm, nor effort too unremitting. And it is in these grand truths in which all are agreed, wherein lies the moral force — all they ever have — of those narrower doctrines about which we differ and contend. It is not the Trinity that, as such, has effective moral force as a doc-

trine—not, that is, the peculiarity that it is three, or its *threeness*, but simply the greater truth that it is God. It is not the doctrine of Atonement that has moral force, but the truth of God's mercy through Christ, that lies behind it. And so of other like dogmas. All believe in God, in Jesus, in the future life, in retribution, in righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, in the necessity of holiness for all who would see salvation, in sin as the curse and ruin of the soul. It is these great convictions, universal throughout the Christian world, which make the only doctrines the Christian preacher should dare to name, when he stands up an ambassador of Christ, for the reconciling of the world to God. For God requires not of him to reconcile men to a belief in a Trinity, or to a rejection of it, but to Him in the obedience of a holy life. He requires him not to fight against error, for he has nowhere shown where error lies, nor what it is; but he has called on us to rest not day nor night, till Sin is driven away, and the tempted soul of man made happy in a consciousness of virtue.

Other doctrines than these great universal truths will, and may be held by Christians. There will be philosophical ways of looking at, and explaining the manner of operation of the greater absolute truths, which will give rise to a multitude of minor doctrines, but these are to be held as minor, as immeasurably subordinate to the others; they are to be held as private opinions which one is permitted to entertain for the satisfaction of his own mind, but about which he is bound not to trouble others. They are between his own soul and God; not between him and his neighbor, as if it were the consequence of a feather's weight, whether in respect of them his neighbor believes one way or another. Suppose these minor subordinate doctrines could fairly be put out of sight; suppose Christians could be made to acknowledge them as among the things indifferent, and agree to plead publicly neither for nor against them; suppose all existing sects could at once be brought to this state of mind, and turning away from sectarian differences, except as matter of private interpretation, unite their scattered forces, and their alienated affections, in one combined hearty crusade against Sin, would there be no gain? no gain to the cause of righteousness, none to the cause of true religion, none to the permanent happiness of mankind? It would be, in truth, the rising of a central Sun upon a world of chaos and of darkness. It would be the dawning of a genuine Millennium, it would be Heaven upon earth. But can all existing sects be brought to renounce each its peculiarity, and join hands for peace and righteousness? Alas, there were no possibility, at once, of such a consummation. The last thing we suppose a sect could be brought to do, would be to renounce

the peculiarity that makes it a sect differing from others, and fall back upon the universal absolute truths that make it Christian.

And yet who is not weary of contention? who is not impatient even of the sight or hearing of an argument on the Trinity, that ancient, and as time has proved, insolvable riddle, that root of bitterness and mischief? Who does not long to throw off the polemical yoke, escape from the hard trammels of party, and consecrate what power he may have to the cause of righteousness, to human welfare, to the predominant interests of piety? Perhaps, therefore, there are some in all sects who are ready to abandon the old ways of reforming the world, by forcing upon the consciences of men, at the point of the material or spiritual sword, sectarian dogmas, and instead, would be satisfied with believing Christ, through the heart unto righteousness, and with converting others, not to their own peculiar doctrine, but only from sin to holiness. Would not the spectacle be a striking and affecting one, of a body of Christians agreeing never so much as to name those things wherein they might differ from the rest of the world, nor disturbing by one single inquiry or reproach the peculiar faith of others, proclaiming for their creed only those universal truths in which all unite, and giving all the energies of their nature to their own and the world's redemption, not from errors of the head, but from the sins of the life? Would not the singularity simply, of a sect of Christians making, not a doctrine, but a life, their rallying point, "Holiness unto the Lord," their motto and aim, not a metaphysical subtlety—would not this absolute originality strike the mind, and the imaginations of men, and possibly start the inquiry, whether, if such were the sole aim of all Christian sects instead of one, there might not arise a better prospect of the regeneration of the world.

Are the results of what Christians have accomplished during nearly two thousand years so very satisfactory, that we can desire no change in the methods of operation that have been hitherto adopted? Could anything *worse* happen; could the progress of virtue and of truth possibly be slower, if for the principles of universal religious warfare which have hitherto been acted upon, there were now to be substituted principles of universal peace and union, of the most perfect indifference to the doctrinal distinctions that have so long engrossed the regards of Christians? One cannot but think the experiment worth the trying, that nothing at least could be lost by it; and that they would do a good and a great work who would call those only their Christian doctrines in which all Christians agree; and never so much as name publicly, or as a matter of dispute, those in which they differ, and would then direct all the strength, that would thus be spared from the most exhaust-

ing party warfare, to advancing the moral, religious, spiritual interests of mankind.

A defence, however, is made of controversy, and of this minute subdivision into sects. The world, it is said, is kept by such means wide awake ; there is life at least. If there is life, it is a sort of troubled spasmodic life, an afflicted angry life, which seems far removed from such a life, as the teaching and the life of Jesus promise. We trust some better form of Christian life is yet to be evolved as an effect of Christian truth. But it is not true, it is, in our judgment, little other than libellous to affirm of our nature, that there can be religious life only as there shall be contention. We need not, however, reason about it ; facts, recent history, show that moral enterprises are capable of exciting as much enthusiasm at the present day, as ever a good-for-nothing point of Calvinism has done in former days, or can now. The zeal, yet the wisely tempered zeal, and the moral effort in the great cause of temperance, show that the heart of the people is not quite dead, that it is readily and deeply stirred by a moral cause ; and make it quite reasonable to believe, that by and by the time will come, when religion, simply as a moral principle, a principle of righteousness, a principle of moral reform, a guide of life, a saviour of the soul through holiness, not through doctrine, will awaken in the minds of men a thousand times the gratitude for its gift, as a thousand times the ardor in its service, that it ever has done as standing for those peculiar doctrines, to which men have ascribed salvation, and for which, accordingly, that they might have their triumphant way, they have kept the world in arms.

The example of Jesus recommends this indifference to doctrinal error, this single-hearted predominant devotion to the moral, the practical, the spiritual, the devotional. Doubtless there were as many metaphysical subtleties afloat in his day, among the Jews, as there have been since. Doubtless there were a thousand questions of opinion, dividing Jew from Jew, in that time, just as there are similar questions dividing asunder Christians now. At any rate, there were the sects of Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians and Essenes, with their respective philosophies, for all the great subjects of human thought, about which their affections and interests gathered, and on whose prevalence they believed, as Christians believe concerning theirs, the life of the world to hang. Did Jesus enter into these questions ? Did he so much as touch them ? He gave himself little concern about speculative error ; he took little pains to set it right. He was engrossed by larger cares, by more universal truths, by the moral and spiritual; and in correcting religious errors, he did it, not by controverting them, so much as by preaching the great positive truths that

would slowly, but surely, reform them, and in the end take their place. How can it be doubted that, if Christians, forgetting other things, forgetting speculative error, error of the intellect, would consecrate themselves to the service of the great moral interests of mankind, Christianity would show itself, more than it has ever done before, to be the power of God unto salvation. Is it not true, that just so far as any peculiar glory, and special triumphs are to be mentioned in her honor, as having accrued in the present age, their cause and origin are to be found in a total abandonment of the old methods of sectarian warfare, in a forgetting and a neglect of doctrine,—are to be found distinctly in moral action, in the reform of evil practices and customs? If Christians banded themselves against other sins, as they have done against the sin of drunkenness, sinking wholly out of sight party names and doctrine, can it be doubted that the same success would ensue, and a new Heaven, and a new Earth bless our eyes?

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*A Discourse on the Character and Writings of William Ellery Channing, D. D.* By ORVILLE DEWEY, Pastor of the Church of the Messiah in New York. New York: Charles S. Francis and Company. 1843. pp. 40.

THIS discourse of Dr. Dewey easily places itself at the head of all those, that have been written upon the life and character of Dr. Channing. There is visible throughout a larger, freer grasp of the subject; it shows a great mind analysed and criticised by another fully capable of appreciating both its capacities and its achievements—its scarcely inferior. If we wished to present to another, by a single comprehensive glance, reaching before and after, above and around, what Dr. Channing was and did, we should place in his hands this discourse. It is all true, yet without exaggeration; it is but a sketch, yet, like the free sketches of the great masters in another art, it possesses more power than if all the details were filled in by a less skilful hand; it is marked by great unity of plan, at the same time that there is no want of variety in the topics, or of completeness in the finished work. There could hardly have been a more appropriate discourse for the late Providence Convention, where it was repeated, bearing as closely upon the interests, and addressing itself as strictly to the wants of the profession, as if it had been written with reference to such an occasion. Seeing how the subject was handled, there could hardly have been a more apt and profitable "*concio ad clerum.*"

It is matter of general congratulation, that Dr. Dewey has returned after a long absence, with so much strength for the great

and most important duties of his place, a place that not only of necessity calls him to the most exhausting labors, but exposes him also as a particularly desirable mark for the attacks of those fallen spirits, who, through false witnessing against him, would love to stab the character of a whole denomination. It is a grief, that so soon after his return after a two years' absence, he should have become the object of the low abuse of that veteran maligner, Dr. Cox, which, however, would have fallen dead and despised even among his own party, who knew sufficiently the worthlessness of that person's random speech, had it not been caught up here by an idle press and blazoned before the world. He needed not to have given it a second thought. Slander originating in such quarters refutes itself.

Dr. Dewey's Discourse is an answer to the question, What was the mission of Channing's life? The answer in brief is, "It was to set forth the True, the Right, the Godlike, and to portray its loveliness and majesty." More at length it is given in the following words.

"This then, I say, was the mission of Channing. And certainly I do not know the man of the present day, who has done more to stamp upon the world the sense of the True, the Right, the Godlike, than Channing. His work in this respect was not technical, not what is ordinarily called philosophical; that of the highest genius seldom is so; it was the work of inward meditation and prayer. Especially in him it was sacred, a religious work. From the adoring contemplation of what God is, from that altar he brought the burning and luminous thought of what man should be. There was a consecration to him of this theme. Every thing about it was invested with a solemn, religious light. He knew no true grandeur in man, but a divine grandeur. He questioned much what the world calls greatness, however lauded and idolized; he had set up another and purer idea of greatness in his own mind; and no prophet of modern times, I think, has done so much to break down the idol, and to establish the true worship instead." — pp. 5, 6.

The preacher goes on then to speak of the "forms which this labor of his life assumed," and shows that in his preaching, in his writings, in his conversation, he was true to this one great aim. Dr. Dewey's description of the eloquence of Channing will strike those, who have heard that great preacher, as eminently just.

"He would never lend himself to the popular and taking forms of pulpit display, wherewith either to alarm or overawe or astonish or charm the hearer. He never attempted any graphic representation of heaven or hell, of the last Judgment or of the sinner's peril; though no preacher, perhaps, had ever at command the stores of a richer imagination. But all was sober in his administration of religion. To utter the truth, the naked truth, was his highest aim and ambition. The

effect, he was willing to leave with God and with the heart of the hearer. He never seemed to labor so much to enforce truth as to utter it; but this kind of utterance, this swelling and almost bursting of the inmost heart to express itself, was the most powerful enforcement. There was always, however, a chastening and restraining hand laid upon the strong nature within; and this manner has led some, I believe, to deny to Channing the gift of the highest eloquence. I know not what they call eloquence; but this restrained emotion always seems to me, I must say, one of its most touching demonstrations; and surely that which reaches the heart and unlocks the fountains of tears, is its very essence; and that which penetrates to the still depths of the conscience, that lie beneath tears, is its very awfulness and grandeur. Such was the eloquence of Channing. I shall never forget the effect upon me, of the first sermon I ever heard from him. Shall I confess too, that holding then a faith somewhat different from his, I listened to him with a certain degree of distrust and prejudice? These barriers, however, soon gave way; and such was the effect of the simple and heart-touching truths and tones, which fell from his lips, that it would have been a relief to me to have bowed my head and to have wept without restraint throughout the whole service. And yet I did not weep; for there was something in that impression too solemn and deep for tears. I claim perfection for nothing human; and perhaps, my idea of this kind of communication goes beyond anything I have ever heard. No words ever realized it, but those calm and solemn words of Jesus Christ, at which the heart stands still to listen; and which it is wonderful that any body dares ever to dilute into prolix comments. But certainly no preaching, that I have heard, has come so near, in this respect, to the model in my mind—I say not irreverently the great model—as the preaching of Channing. And I should not omit to mention another trait in his religious sensibility, that imparted to its manifestations a peculiar interest. And this trait seems to me so marked and unusual, as to be worthy of a moment's comment. In most men's religious feeling, I believe, there is something singularly general and vague. Their emotions revolve about this sacred theme rather than penetrate into it; and though it is bedewed with their tears, only the more do their thoughts glide about the surface. They weep; but they do not think; they do not meditate their religion deeply in their hearts. And thus their discourse has a general truth, without any discriminating pertinence; their words taken together have a meaning, but there is not a meaning in every word; there is no inward prompting to make them use the words they do use, rather than some other words of the same general import. The pen that writes them is not dipped in the heart. In short, you know that there is not any such reality in most men's religion, as is felt and seen in the sentiments that attach them to home, to kindred, to all the palpable interests of this life. But it was not so with the remarkable and venerated person of whom I speak. His thoughts on this theme, the deep and living verities of his own experience, had an original impress, a marked individuality, a heartfelt truth, and a singular power to penetrate the heart. His words had a strange and heart-stirring vitality. Some living power within seemed to preside over the selection and tone of every word, and to give it more than the force and weight of a whole discourse.

from other men. Many have I known so to feel this touching influence, not only in the church but by the fire-side and in the friendly circle, that they could scarcely restrain their feelings within the bounds of domestic and social decorum." — pp. 8-11.

For the sake of the authority of his true and earnest words, we extract the remarks of Dr. Dewey on the slavery publications of Dr. Channing.

"The publications which next demand our notice are those upon the subject of slavery. In these writings we still see the same great and generous mind at work, engaged in its natural and rightful vocation, the expounder of duty, the vindicator of lofty right and reason, the defender of sacred and eternal principle against all human conventions. I honor this noble champion of the oppressed, while I have some doubts as to the practical result to which his reasonings led him. That is to say, I have no doubt as to what is to be felt, but I have some doubt, I have much doubt, and difficulty, as to what is to be done.

This is not the place to discuss the point; for it requires a discourse of itself. Nor is it demanded of us in considering the writings of Channing. For his mission was, not so much to propose remedies, as to arouse the public conscience. He did not connect himself with any specific associations or measures for relief, but simply entered that great field of discussion which is the rightful domain of all intelligent minds; of all men who are not prepared themselves to be slaves.

"This is not only our rightful province, but it is the only province open to us. Direct interference with slavery is out of our power. The only legitimate influence we can exert upon it must come in the form of argument. This was the chosen field of Channing. Who will say he had not a right to enter it? How he acquitted himself in this field, is, indeed, the question; for the right of discussion is no guarantee for right discussion. On this question there will, of course, be different opinions. To say that I do myself agree with him in every point, is more than one independent mind can well say of another.

"But, passing by all questions about the philosophy of the case, and the methods of relief, I cannot refuse to see, in the general conduct of this argument, a master's hand, a work throughout of unsurpassed strength and beauty. Never, any where, I think, have I more felt the power of Channing's mind and style, than in these writings. It seems as if the nerve of moral indignation had compressed and clenched his thought within the narrowest possible compass. The themes, indeed, were well fitted to touch a mind like his. What a man is worth; what is the sanctity of a soul; what is the sacredness of a nature allied, affiliated to God; and what is the wrong of setting a human foot to crush down that nature; what is the wrong of bringing a mass of mere earthly conveniences and pleasures to extinguish that spark of heavenly fire, only that they may be brightened and warmed for a moment; what is the wrong of chaining an angel-nature to the plough that tills our fields, or to the chariot that rolls upon our highways; all this is set forth in burning words, which, when all this angry disputing shall be done, will stand as golden mottoes in the books of emancipated tribes and races of men. Yes; all this is true. I speak not of those who,

involved in this relationship without their own agency, feel the tremendous moral solecism which it involves, and would gladly escape from it. But for the slave-holder, that defends his position as a lawful and righteous one, or means to hold on to it, right or wrong, because it is a matter of property, I say, all this is true; it is terrible truth: it is truth too high for any mortal hand to beat down. Let men reason as they will; let them defend, explain, qualify, soften the matter as they will; my heart tells me that I was not made to be a slave, and I believe that every man's heart tells him the same thing. The slave-master's heart tells him that, and it would revolt at the supposition that any combination of circumstances, any leagued principalities and powers, though they were an hierarchy of angels, should crush out his nature's birth-right, by making him a slave. And if he will voluntarily inflict this condition upon another, I deem it not too solemn to remind him of a WORD that says, "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." — pp. 20-23.

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*Guide for writing Latin; consisting of rules and examples for practice.* By JOHN PHILIP KREBS, Doctor of Philosophy and principal School Director in the Dutchy of Nassau. *From the German by Samuel H. Taylor;* Principal of Phillips Academy. Andover: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell. New York: M. H. Newman. 1843. 12mo. pp. 479.

THE name of the translator, and the fact that Dr. Beck read the work in manuscript and has introduced it into the course of instruction in Cambridge, speak much in its favor. And indeed it has many excellences. It appears to be in itself a complete Latin grammar, and the author treats that most puzzling subject, the dependence of Latin words and tenses, in a clear and intelligible manner. Yet we have also strong feelings, prejudices it may be, against the book, not only from its formidable size, but from the childlike understanding, which the first part of it especially appears to attribute to the pupil, in making so many simple obvious remarks, which are true to be sure, but which appear to us to swell the size of the book unnecessarily. We doubt very much whether a child may not be better employed than in studying Latin at all; and whether a young man would not do better in a careful reading of classic writers, than in spending so much time in the writing of Latin as the size of this book would seem to imply. Some time, however, he should so spend, more than is usually bestowed by students in this country, and perhaps no guide will be so useful to him as judicious selections from this work.

The translator in his preface, says, "The author has made it his object to guard against giving the student too much or too little assistance." How far the author has succeeded in this, each

teacher who uses it will of course judge for himself. We think he has erred in giving the scholar too much aid; and in some places, so much that the scholar himself will be tired of it.

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*Elements of Algebra, being an Abridgment of Day's Algebra, adapted to the capacities of the young, and the method of instruction in schools and academies.* By JAMES B THOMPSON, A. M. New Haven : Durrie and Peck. 1844. 12mo. pp. 252.

All men cannot study the same sciences; and even those who do, cannot use the same text books. Different orders of minds, different purposes of study, different opportunities of leisure, require different aids. To those of decided taste for mathematics, or those of mature mind who wish to pursue that science, or for those whose intended profession requires an acquaintance with it, we know of no elementary course equal to that of Professor Peirce. But those who wish to take a humbler walk, and not stray beyond the bounds of simple Algebra, will perhaps find other treatises more suitable for them than his.

Day's Algebra has been much used in our schools and colleges, and the present abridgment, made at the author's request by Mr. Thomson, is, we think more useful than the original work. Many writers on Mathematics become obscure in their diffuse attempts at simplification. The present treatise is clear, simple, and concise, and in reading it we were pleased with the general justness of the views. A few lines, however, seem to us to be wanted in further explanation of negative exponents. In another place, the brevity and carelessness of some remarks on negative roots might lead the pupil to think, that positive roots were the only real ones. But in the very example in question, 10 and 40 are really parts of 30, whose product is eight times their difference, as 24 and 6 are. These are, however, but small blemishes compared with the general merits of the book.

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*The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Power thereof, according to the Word of God, by that Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr. JOHN COTTON, Teacher of the Church at Boston, in New-England, Tending to reconcile some present difficulties about Discipline.* Boston: Reprinted by Tappan & Dennet, 1843. 12mo. pp. 108.

A TREATISE upon congregationalism, being a reprint of that well known tract upon the subject, by "the learned and

judicious divine, Mr. John Cotton." With good judgment and taste the volume is an exact copy in form, spelling, border-work and all, of the original work. While Presbyterianism and Episcopacy are rejoicing in their defences and defenders, it is well that the true church, howbeit she might well throw herself upon the plain language and intent of Scripture, as the best and her all-sufficient foundation, should also be able to point to her champions. We hope the editor of the present little volume will find the encouragement he wishes, and issue, as he proposes to do, other reprints of a similar character.

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THE two last volumes of Mr. Norton's work upon the genuineness of the Gospels, have just appeared, published by John Owen. They are among the most beautiful specimens of our modern typography. The second volume contains, of the text, 279 pages, with 200 of notes; the third volume, 324 of text, and 80 of notes. The public will learn with the highest satisfaction, that the present work is not to terminate Mr. Norton's invaluable labors in the defence of our religion, but that we may look for a volume on the internal evidences of Christianity, to appear at the same time with a new translation of the Gospels. He thus announces his design at the close of his preface. "The three volumes now published, contain such a view, as it has been in my power to give, of the historical evidence, both direct and subsidiary, of the genuineness of the Gospels. Should my life and health be continued, it is my purpose to add another volume concerning the internal evidences of their genuineness. But I wish this to appear simultaneously with a new translation of the Gospels, accompanied by explanatory notes, on which I have been long engaged. Such a translation seems to me a necessary basis for the volume proposed, while the volume may serve as an introduction to the translation."

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WE have received from the Rev. G. Armstrong, of Lewin's Mead, Bristol, England, copies of an Address of the Unitarian Clergy of England and Ireland, to those of the United States, on the subject of Slavery,—which, if it had been received a few days earlier, would have been printed at length in our present number. As it is, a copy of the English edition will be sent to every clergyman with his Examiner; and the remainder will be, a part, distributed in the way indicated by Mr. Armstrong, and a part left at the store of Munroe & Co., for the use of those who may call for them.—Accompanying these, was sent a copy of the same address, beautifully engrossed

upon a large sheet of parchment, with the signatures attached to it of more than an hundred of the ministers of England and Ireland. This will, for the present, be deposited with Messrs. Munroe & Co., where it can be seen.

MESSRS. MUNROE & CO. will shortly publish a reprint of Sermons by the Rev. James Martineau, of Liverpool, in one volume, 12mo. Also, a volume of Doctrinal Sermons by the Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. They have in press a new edition of Professor Sparks's Letters to Wyatt, on the Episcopal controversy.

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#### EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE present Editor's connexion with the Examiner, which commenced with the year 1839 (the first number of that year was issued by his predecessors), terminates with the present number. The subscribers and the public have already been informed, and the information is here only repeated, that a union has taken place between the Examiner and the Miscellany, and that the new publication, still under the name of the Examiner, and retaining essentially the same form, will be issued under the joint editorial care of Dr. Lamson and Dr. Gannett, gentlemen who will command the entire respect and confidence of the literary and religious community. In order that the work may flourish, a large increase of subscribers is needed. But they can be obtained only through the active exertions of our ministers. In very many of our parishes, not a single copy of the Examiner is taken; and in many of the largest and most wealthy, but one, two, or three. The people are, frequently, ignorant even of the existence of the work; while if they were informed of that fact by their pastors, and the character of the work were truly described to them, very many would find it to be the very book they want, and would gladly receive it. In a single instance, many years ago, where such information was communicated, it was considered as a favor done, and the names of subscribers at once rose from some fifteen or twenty to eighty. Let the clergy, if they approve of the work, take an interest in its circulation, and the present number of subscribers were very easily doubled. Without their coöperation the travelling agent can accomplish nothing.

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The title and index of the present volume will be sent out with the next number.





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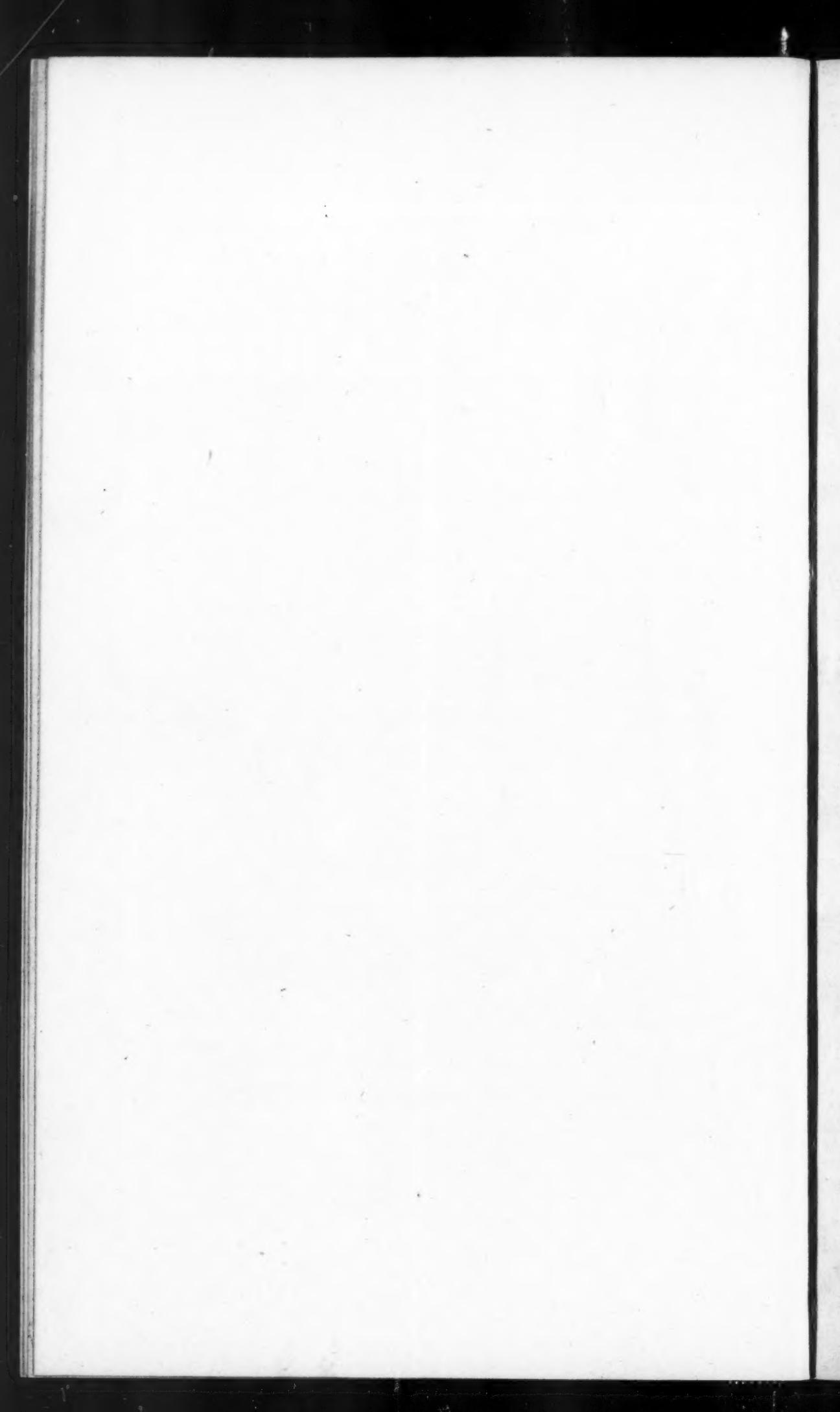
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